A H Hewitt.

Hope Tillyard.

Hope Dillyard

GREAT ENGLISH PLAYS

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GREAT ENGLISH PLAYS

TWENTY-THREE
MASTERPIECES FROM *THE MYSTERIES* TO *SHERIDAN*
(excluding Shakespeare)

WITH THREE REPRESENTATIVE PLAYS
OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

edited
with a running commentary
by
H. F. RUBINSTEIN

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ommenting on a recent survey of the English drama, a reviewer remarked : t is inevitable, perhaps, that the best part of the book should be that which als with the stage of to-day ; the drama of yesterday has little more than an chæological interest ; it is sometimes spoken of reverently as an Inspiration an Inheritance, but more usually it is an encumbrance."

The primary object of this volume is to dispel this widespread prejudice ainst pre-Shavian plays. To speak of any work " reverently as an Inspiration an Inheritance " is of course to damn it out of hand for all practical purses. Once such an impression is conveyed, advocacy, however skilful and quent, defeats its own end, on the principle of *qui s'excuse s'accuse*. There is ly one defence to the faint praise of the drama of yesterday. It is to let it eak for itself. These plays—selected from many hundreds—are interesting their own merits. If you don't believe it, read them. (We are appealing, of urse, to the uninitiated—to the student and the " general reader.") Possibly n object on principle to reading plays. If a play is not good enough for the nager of Drury Lane Theatre to produce with the co-operation of Sir Gerald Maurier and Miss Tallulah Bankhead, it can't be worth reading. If those e your sentiments, you are a hopeless case. Alternatively, you must realise at by not reading great plays you may be missing a great treat.

Or, again, the plain man may have been " put off " reading great plays by ing them referred to as " dramatic literature," and by assuming, on inadeate evidence, that, to enjoy them, it is necessary to hack through mountains d wade through bogs, of explanations and queries and textual problems, ightened and deepened by the labours of each succeeding generation of comntators. Let us be perfectly frank about this side of the business. If a novice ad these plays, the chances are that he or she will want to know more about em. There is plenty to be known. There is much that is not yet known ; rhaps more that will never be known. That is by the way. These plays are t before the public to read through in the kind of mood that would be duced by seeing them acted. It would be the height of folly, assuming it were ssible, to insert lengthy footnotes into a theatrical performance. The point a word or a line may escape the spectator of a good old play—or of a bad w play, for that matter—here and there. If he be a scholarly person, he will nt to look it up on his return from the playhouse. Or he may be too tired, forget all about it in the pleasurable sensations of a well-spent evening. A od play, for a person of imagination, reads precisely as well as it acts. The rious reader must seek further enlightenment on incidental features in the propriate quarters. All these plays have been edited from time to time by ecialists who have tracked obscure allusions, and deduced brilliant interpreions of ambiguous passages, for the satisfaction of those in whom enjoyment s aroused a yearning to recover the full atmosphere of a first performce. If this book sends the reader away to the nearest reference library in est of the authorities, so much the better. He will turn up, he may steep nself in, Volumes V. and VI. of the *Cambridge History of English Literature*, in ofessor Allardyce Nicoll's *British Drama* and *Restoration Drama*, or in the three lumes of C. M. Gayley's *Representative English Comedies* ; he will have no fficulty in finding the latest and most thorough editions of the complete rks of the great dramatists, or—if his interest does not extend to the " whole g "—he will avail himself of the selected plays provided by the Mermaid lition, the Everyman Library, or the World's Classic Series. And in all such terprises this editor's blessing will go with him.

. . . . . .

We take for granted a degree of interest in plays, because we have the

good fortune to live in a civilised community. A human society without drama would be analogous to a summertime in which no birds sing. The singing of birds is unchanging.

"The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown."

Mankind changes, and the drama moves with the times, though not necessarily in relation to the ups and downs of its eternal audience. It moves superficially with the kaleidoscope of fashion—as costume changes. All dress is designed to clothe the human figure, and all drama, under analysis, yields a severely limited variety of plots. It might be an amusing pastime to group the plots of the plays here collected into their several classifications. But plots are mere pretexts for plays, great or little. The quality of drama is the thing that matters and the quality of drama, so to speak, "droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven." There may be a long drought, followed by a sudden deluge. Or there may be a steady drizzle, never ending. The course of English drama may perhaps be best described in geological metaphor. It has run at a dead level, varied twice by gradual inclines to mountain ranges. After the first of these mountain ranges there was a gap, a subsidiary lower ridge, then an abrupt descent to the old level, and a regular steppe the other side. About the second mountain range we are progressing unevenly as we write. Have we already reached the summit? Nobody can say.

Every playgoer is vaguely familiar with the present situation. At least he knows that for a long period, ending about the middle of the reign of Queen Victoria, the English drama was barren of great plays, and that a recovery took place during the last three decades of the century, beginning with the production of *Society* in 1865, and suddenly accelerated by the publication in 1898 of Bernard Shaw's *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant*, in the light of which Tom Robertson appeared almost prehistoric. Between those dates were made many plays, and since 1898 have been made many more, which, by virtue of some mysterious *flair*, will remain permanently interesting. What every playgoer does not know is that a parallel phenomenon occurred three hundred years before, a definite dramatic advance, that, after various sporting experiments, gained momentum during the eighties and nineties, culminating, *fin de siècle*, in the plays pleasant and unpleasant of Shakespeare, and inspiring a hydra-headed school that flourished thereafter (on and off) for about a century. The products of that upheaval furnish the major portion of this collection of great English plays. They were put in the shade by Shakespeare, and, with Shakespeare, they are sadly out of fashion, but there is in them a kind of life—if you like, of beauty—which defies alike time and neglect. They were rescued from all but complete oblivion by Charles Lamb in 1808, and since his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, who lived about the time of Shakespeare*, they have been discovered periodically. It is great fun discovering them, to speak personally; one's chief regret is that it cannot happen more than once in a lifetime, and one has a distinct feeling of envy for those who may be about to read, say, *The Silent Woman* or *The Bondman* for the first time.

Our object has been to make a selection illustrative of the various sides of the movement that carried Shakespeare. We have further sought to enable the reader to view this movement in perspective. The "Elizabethan" plays are preceded by outstanding examples of three earlier stages of dramatic development, and we have included, as a sort of appendix, three plays that were written at a period following the complete obliteration of "Elizabethan" influence, and that bring us, as it were, out of the abyss, up to the vantage-ground of the present day. As to whether this vantage-ground is higher or lower than the earlier eminence we will not hazard an opinion; but we do submit with some

confidence that to dismiss these earlier plays as either an Inspiration or an Inheritance of the modern drama is, with the best intentions, to talk gibberish.

. . . . . .

The Editor has many debts to acknowledge. He is particularly grateful to Messrs. J. M. Dent for allowing him to help himself to the texts of the plays published in the Everyman's Library, under the editorship of Mr. Ernest Rhys, and to Mr. Rhys personally for his exceptional kindness and courtesy in the matter. The following plays have been taken from different volumes in that Library : *A Wakefield Nativity* and *Everyman* (from " *Everyman* " *with other Interludes*), *Doctor Faustus* and *Edward the Second* (from their *Marlowe*), *The Old Wives' Tale* and *The Spanish Tragedy* (from the respective volumes of *Minor Elizabethan Drama*), *The Silent Woman* (from their *Ben Jonson*), *The Maid's Tragedy* (from their *Beaumont and Fletcher*), *Venice Preserved*, *The Way of the World* and *The Provoked Wife* (from *A Volume of Restoration Plays*), *She Stoops to Conquer* (from their *Goldsmith*) and *The School for Scandal* (from their *Sheridan*). Acknowledgment is likewise due to the Oxford University Press for kind permission to use the texts of Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and Webster's *The White Devil* as given in C. B. Wheeler's *Six Plays by Contemporaries of Shakespeare* (World's Classics) ; to the Cambridge University Press for the permitted use of the text of *The Chances* from the Cambridge edition of Beaumont and Fletcher edited by the late Mr. Arnold Glover and by Mr. A. R. Waller ; to Messrs. Chatto & Windus for permission to reprint *Eastward Ho ! The Bondman*, and *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* from the complete editions of Chapman and Massinger (edited by R. H. Shepherd and Francis Cunningham respectively) published by them ; to Mr. Francis Edwards for kindly permitting the use of the late Mr. J. S. Farmer's text of *John, Tyb, and Sir John* (from *Two Tudor Shrew Plays*) ; to Mr. Henry Arthur Jones and Messrs. Macmillan for permission to reprint *Judah*, and to the trustees of the Oscar Wilde estate and Messrs. Methuen & Co. for permission to include *Lady Windermere's Fan* in the volume.

H. F. R.

14th Century

A WAKEFIELD NATIVITY

(TOWNELEY MYSTERIES)

This play belongs to a group of five included in a cycle of *Mysteries* commonly known as the Towneley Collection. They were produced under ecclesiastical auspices at Widkirk, near Wakefield, about 1350, as part of a religio-dramatic festival celebrated annually throughout England on Corpus Christi day. The origin of the Mystery is to be found in the *tropes* and dialogue-chanting of the conventional divine service, the dramatic element of which, from its earliest Latin forms, was developed by successive generations, until the representation of biblical episodes in the vernacular became a normal activity of the Church. To the Mystery was added the Miracle, a corresponding treatment of episodes in the lives of the saints. The establishment of Corpus Christi day in 1264 gave the movement a definite impetus and kept it alive during the succeeding centuries, until the controversies produced by the Reformation made religion a "sore subject" for dramatists, as for other publicists. It will be seen that the Englishman of those days, if he took his pleasures sadly, was willing to take his religion humanly, and with more than a spice of comic relief. Strictly orthodox churchmen not unnaturally objected to the performances.

At the height of the movement, the production of this people's drama was organised, in the larger towns, by the local guilds or trades-unions—each of which would undertake a single independent episode. Hence the cycle form in which it has survived in popular tradition. The plays were performed on a rough scaffolding, around which the populace would congregate: the casts progressing from one such "pageant" to the next. An English stage was thus improvised to meet the growing popularity of an English drama.

The Wakefield cycle contains two nativity plays, of which this is the second in order. (Whence it is commonly known as the "Second Shepherds' Play.") The group of five mysteries above referred to bear the impress of an individual creative mind. The author—unfortunately anonymous—might claim the title of the First English Dramatist. His comedy belongs to what we would call the "Manchester School."

A WAKEFIELD NATIVITY

Characters

1st Shepherd, 2nd Shepherd, 3rd Shepherd, Mac, *the Sheep-stealer*, Mac's Wife, Gill, Mary, The Child Christ, An Angel

1st Shepherd: Lord! what, these weathers are cold, and I
am ill happed;
I am near hand-dold,[1] so long have I napped;
My legs bend and fold, my fingers are chapped,
It is not as I would, for I am all lapped
In sorrow

[1] numb of hand.

In storms and tempest,
Now in the east, now in the west,
Woe is him has never rest,
Mid day nor morrow.
But we silly shepherds, that walk upon the moor,
In faith, we are near hands out of the door ;
No wonder, as it stands, if we be poor,
For the tilth of our lands lies fallow as the floor,
We are so lamed,
So taxed and shamed.
We are made hand-tamed,
With these gentlery-men.
Thus they rieve us of rest, Our Lady them wary,
These men that are lord-fest,[1] they cause the plough tarry
That men say is for the best, we find it contrary,
Thus are husbands [2] opprest, in point to miscarry,
In life.
Thus hold they us under,
Thus they bring us in blunder,
It were great wonder,
And ever should we thrive.
For may he get a paint sleeve,[3] or a brooch now on days,
Woe is he that shall grieve, or once again says,
Dare no man him reprieve, what mast'ry he has,
And yet may none believe one word that he says—
No letter.
He can make purveyance,
With boast and bragance,[4]
And all through maintenance,
Of men that are greater.
There shall come a swain, as proud as a po,[5]
He must borrow my wain, my plough also,
Then I am full fain to grant or he go.
Thus live we in pain, anger, and woe,
By night and day ;
He must have if he longéd
If I should forgang [6] it,
I were better be hangéd
Than once say him nay.
It does me good, as I walk thus by mine own,
Of this world for to talk in manner of moan
To my sheep will I stalk and hearken anon
There abide on a balk, or sit on a stone
Full soon.
For I trow, pardie !
True men if they be,
We get more company
Or it be noon.

2ND SHEPHERD : "Beniste" [7] and "Dominus !" what may this bemean ?
Why fares this world thus, oft have we not seen.

[1] fast tied (to a lord, as a public-house to a brewer). [2] husbandmen.
[3] a painted sleeve. [4] bragging.
[5] peacock. [6] forego. [7] Benedicite.

Lord, these weathers are spitous,[1] and the weather full
keen ;
And the frost so hideous they water mine een,
No lie.
Now in dry, now in wet,
Now in snow, now in sleet,
When my shoon freeze to my feet
It is not all easy.
But as far as I ken, or yet as I go,
We silly wed-men dree mickle woe ;[2]
We have sorrow then and then, it falls often so,
Silly capyl, our hen, both to and fro
She cackles,
But begin she to croak,
To groan or to cluck,
Woe is him, say of our cock,
For he is in the shackles.
These men that are wed, have not all their will,
When they are full hard sted,[3] they sigh full still ;
God wait they are led full hard and full ill,
In bower nor in bed they say not there till
This tide.
My part have I found,
My lesson is learn'd,
Woe is him that is bound,
For he must abide.
But now late in our lives, a marvel to me,
That I think my heart rives,[4] such wonders to see,
What that destiny drives it should so be,
Some men will have two wives, and some men three,
In store.
Some are woe that have any ;
But so far ken I,
Woe is he who has many,
For he feels it sore.
But young men of wooing, for God that you bought,
Be well ware of wedding, and think in your thought
" Had I wist " is a thing it serves ye of nought ;
Mickle still mourning has wedding home brought,
And griefs,
With many a sharp shower,
For thou may catch in an hour
That shall serve thee full sour
As long as thou lives.
For as read I epistle, I have one to my fear
As sharp as a thistle, as rough as a brere.[5]
She is browed like a bristle with a sour lenten cheer ;
Had she once wet her whistle she could sing full clear
Her pater-noster.
She is as great as a whale,
She has a gallon of gall ;

1 spiteful. 2 we silly wedded men endure much woe.
3 placed, bestead. 4 is riven asunder. 5 briar.

By him that died for us all !
I would I had run till I lost her.

1ST SHEPHERD : God look over the row, full deafly ye stand.

2ND SHEPHERD : Yea, the devil in thy maw !—so tariand,[1]
Saw thou aught now of Daw ?

1ST SHEPHERD : Yea, on a lea land
Heard I him blow, he comes here at hand,
Not far ;
Stand still.

2ND SHEPHERD : Why ?

1ST SHEPHERD : For he comes here, hope I.

2ND SHEPHERD : He will make us both a lie,
But if we beware.

3RD SHEPHERD : Christ's cross me speed, and Saint Nicholas !
Thereof had I need, it is worse than it was.
Whoso could take heed, and let the world pass,
It is ever in dread and brittle as glass,
And slithers,[2]
This world fared never so,
With marvels mo and mo,[3]
Now in weal, now in woe,
And all things withers.
Was never since Noah's flood such floods seen,
Winds and rains so rude, and storms so keen,
Some stammered, some stood in doubt, as I ween,
Now God turn all to good, I say as I mean,
For ponder.
These floods so they drown
Both in fields and in town,
They bear all down,
And that is a wonder.
We that walk in the nights, our cattle to keep,
We see sudden sights, when other men sleep :
Yet methinks my heart lights, I see shrews peep,
Ye are two, all wights,[4] I will give my sheep
A turn.
But full ill have I meant,
As I walk on this bent,[5]
I may lightly repent,
My toes if I spurn.
Ah, sir, God you save, and master mine !
A drink fain would I have and somewhat to dine.

1ST SHEPHERD : Christ's curs, my knave, thou art a lazy hyne.[6]

2ND SHEPHERD : What, the boy list rave. Abide until syne[7]
We have made it.
I'll thrift on thy pate !
Though the shrew came late
Yet is he in state
To dine if he had it.

1 tarrying. 2 slithers, slides away. 3 more and more.
4 You are two who wit, or know, all. 5 field.
6 hind. 7 till such time as we have made it.

3RD SHEPHERD : Such servants as I, that sweats and swinks,
Eats our bread full dry, and that me forthinks :
We are oft wet and weary when master men winks,
Yet comes full lately both dinners and drinks,
But neatly.
Both our dame and our sire,
When we have run in the mire,
They can nip at our hire,[1]
And pay us full lately.
But hear my truth, master, for the fare that ye make
I shall do thereafter work, as I take ;
I shall do a little, sir, and strive and still lack,
For yet lay my supper never on my stomack
In fields.
Whereto should I threap ?[2]
With my staff can I leap,
And men say " light cheap
Letherly for yields."[3]
1ST SHEPHERD : Thou wert an ill lad, to ride on wooing
With a man that had but little of spending.
2ND SHEPHERD : Peace, boy !—I bade : no more jangling,
Or I shall make thee afraid, by the heaven's king !
With thy gawds ;
Where are our sheep, boy, we scorn ?
3RD SHEPHERD : Sir, this same day at morn,
I them left in the corn,
When they rang lauds ;
They have pasture good, they cannot go wrong.
1ST SHEPHERD : That is right by the rood, these nights are long,
Yet I would, or we yode,[4] one gave us a song.
2ND SHEPHERD : So I thought as I stood, to mirth us among.[5]
3RD SHEPHERD : I grant.
1ST SHEPHERD : Let me sing the tenory.
2ND SHEPHERD : And I the treble so high.
3RD SHEPHERD : Then the mean falls to me ;
Let see how ye chaunt.
[MAC *enters, with a cloak thrown over his smock.*
MAC. : Now, Lord, for thy names seven, that made both moon and starns[6]
Well more than I can even : thy will, Lord, of my thorns ;
I am all uneven, that moves oft my horns,[7]
Now would God I were in heaven, for there weep no bairns
So still.
1ST SHEPHERD : Who is that pipes so poor ?
MAC : Would God ye knew how I fare !
Lo, a man that walks on the moor,
And has not all his will.
2ND SHEPHERD : Mac, where hast thou gone ? Tell us tidings.

1 stint our wages. 2 argue. 3 a light bargain yields badly.
4 went. 5 to make mirth among us. 6 stars.
7 " harnes " in original, which may mean " harness."

3RD SHEPHERD : Is he come ? Then each one take heed to his things. [*Takes his cloak from him.*

MAC : What, I am a yeoman, I tell you, of the king ;
The self and the same, sent from a great lording,
And sich.[1]
Fy on you, get thee hence,
Out of my presence,
I must have reverence,
Why, who be ich ?[2]

1ST SHEPHERD : Why make ye it so quaint ? Mac, ye do wrong.

2ND SHEPHERD : But, Mac, list, ye saint ? I trow that ye sang.

3RD SHEPHERD : I trow the shrew can paint, the devil might him hang !

MAC : I shall make complaint, and make you all to thwang.[3]
At a word,
And tell even how ye doth.

1ST SHEPHERD : But, Mac, is that sooth ?
Now take out that southern tooth,
And set in a tord.

2ND SHEPHERD : Mac, the devil in your ee,[4] a stroke would I lend you.

3RD SHEPHERD : Mac, know ye not me ? By God, I could tell you.

MAC : God look you all three, methought I had seen you.
Ye are a fair company.

1ST SHEPHERD : Can ye now moan you ?

2ND SHEPHERD : Shrew, jape ![5]
Thus late as thou goes,
What will men suppose ?
And thou hast an ill noise[6]
Of stealing of sheep.

MAC : And I am true as steel all men wait,
But a sickness I feel, that holds me full haytt,[7]
My belly fares not well, it is out of its state.

3RD SHEPHERD : Seldom lies the devil dead by the gate.

MAC : Therefore
Full sore am I and ill,
If I stand stock still ;
I eat not a nedyll[8]
This month and more.

1ST SHEPHERD : How fares thy wife ? By my hood, how fares she ?

MAC : Lies weltering ! by the rood ! by the fire, lo !
And a house full of brood,[9] she drinks well too,
Ill speed other good that she will do ;
But so
Eats as fast as she can,
And each year that comes to man,
She brings forth a lakan,[10]
And some years two.

1 such (of such). 2 I. 3 be thwacked, or flogged. 4 eye.
5 jest. 6 rumour (ill repute). 7 hot.
8 needle—not a little bit. 9 brood, children. 10 plaything.

But were I not more gracious, and richer by far,
I were eaten out of house, and of harbour,
Yet is she a foul dowse, if ye come near.
There is none that trows, nor knows, a war [1]
Than ken I.
Now will ye see what I proffer,
To give all in my coffer
To-morrow next to offer,
Her head mass-penny.

2ND SHEPHERD : I wot so forwaked [2] is none in this shire :
I would sleep if I taked less to my hire.

3RD SHEPHERD : I am cold and naked, and would have a fire.

1ST SHEPHERD : I am weary for-raked, [3] and run in the mire.
Wake thou !

2ND SHEPHERD : Nay, I will lie down-by.
For I must sleep truly.

3RD SHEPHERD : As good a man's son was I
As any of you.
But Mac, come hither, between us shalt thou lie.

MAC : Then might I stay you bedene [4] : of that ye would say,—
No dread.
From my head to my toe
Manus tuas commendo,
Pontio Pilato. [5]
Christ's cross me speed,
[*He rises, the shepherds sleeping, and says :*
Now were time for a man, that lacks what he wold,
To stalk privately then into a fold,
And namely to work then, and be not too bold,
He might abide the bargain, if it were told
At the ending.
Now were time for to revel ;
But he needs good counsel
That fain would fare well,
And has but little spending. [MAC *works a spell on them.*
But about you a circle, as round as a moon,
Till I have done that I will, till that it be noon,
That ye lie stone-still, till that I have done,
And I shall say there till of good words a foyn [6]
On height ;
Over your heads my hand I lift,
Out go your eyes, fore to do your sight,
But yet I must make better shift,
And it be right.
What, Lord ? they sleep hard ! that may ye all hear ;
Was I never a shepherd, but now will I leer [7]
If the flock be scared, yet shall I nap near,
Who draws hitherward, now mends our cheer,
From sorrow :

1 worse. 2 early waked, or perhaps, wearied by watching. 3 over-walked.
4 at once. 5 Into thy hands I commend (them), Pontius Pilate.
6 few. 7 learn.

A fat sheep I dare say,
A good fleece dare I lay,
Eft white when I may,
But this will I borrow.

[*He steals a sheep and goes home.*

MAC (*at his own door*) : How, Gill, art thou in? Get us some light.

HIS WIFE : Who makes such din this time of night?
I am set for to spin : I hope not I might
Rise a penny to win : I shrew them on height.
So fares
A housewife that has been
To be raised thus between :
There may no note be seen
For such small chares.[1]

MAC : Good wife, open the hek[2] See'st thou not what I bring?

WIFE : I may let thee draw the sneck. Ah! come in, my sweeting.

MAC : Yea, thou dost not reck of my long standing.

WIFE : By thy naked neck, thou art like for to hang.

MAC : Go away :
I am worthy of my meat,
For in a strait can I get
More than they that swinck[3] and sweat
All the long day,
Thus it fell to my lot, Gill, I had such grace.

WIFE : It were a foul blot to be hanged for the case.

MAC : I have scaped, Jelott, oft as hard as glass.

WIFE : "But so long goes the pot to the water," men says,
"At last comes it home broken."

MAC : Well know I the token,
But let it never be spoken ;
But come and help fast.
I would he were flayn ;[4] I list we'll eat :
This twelvemonth was I not so fain of one sheep-meat.

WIFE : Come they if he be slain, and hear the sheep bleat?

MAC : Then might I be ta'en : that were a cold sweat.
Go bar
The gate door.

WIFE : Yes, Mac,
For and they come at thy back.

MAC : Then might I pay for all the pack :
The devil of them war![5]

WIFE : A good bowrde[6] have I spied, since thou can none :
Here shall we him hide, till they be gone ;
In my cradle abide. Let me alone,
And I shall lie beside in childbed and groan.

MAC : Thou red?[7]
And I shall say thou wast light
Of a knave child this night.

1 chare,—job, as in charwoman. 2 wicket. 3 toil. 4 flayed.
5 The devil of them give warning. 6 jest. 7 advisest, savest so?

WIFE : Now well is my day bright,
That ever I was bred.
This is a good guise and a far cast ;
Yet a woman's advice helps at the last.
I care never who spies : again go thou fast.
MAC : But I come or they rise ; else blows a cold blast—
I will go sleep. [MAC *goes back to the field.*
Yet sleep all this menye,[1]
And I shall go stalk privily,
As it had never been I
That carried their sheep.
1ST SHEPHERD : *Resurrex à mortrius :* have hold my hand.
Judas carnas dominus, I may not well stand :
My foot sleeps, by Jesus, and I water fastand !
I thought that we laid us full near England.
2ND SHEPHERD : Ah ye !
Lord, how I have slept weel !
As fresh as an eel,
As light I me feel
As leaf on a tree.
3RD SHEPHERD : Benste ![2] be herein ! So my head quakes
My heart is out of skin, what so it makes.
Who makes all this din ? So my brow aches,
To the door will I win. Hark fellows, wakes !
We were four :
See ye anything of Mac now ?
1ST SHEPHERD : We were up ere thou.
2ND SHEPHERD : Man, I give God a vow,
Yet heed he nowhere.
3RD SHEPHERD : Methought he was wrapped in a wolf's-skin.
1ST SHEPHERD : So are many happed, now namely within.
2ND SHEPHERD : When we had long napped ; methought with a gin
A fat sheep he trapped, but he made no din.
3RD SHEPHERD : Be still :
Thy dream makes thee wood :[3]
It is but phantom, by the rood.
1ST SHEPHERD : Now God turn all to good,
If it be his will.
2ND SHEPHERD : Rise, Mac, for shame ! thou ly'st right long
MAC : Now Christ, his holy name be us amang,
What is this ? for Saint James !—I may not well gang,
I trust I be the same. Ah ! my neck has lain wrang
Enough
Mickle thank, since yester-even
Now, by Saint Stephen !
I was flayed with a sweven,—[4]
My heart out of slough.[5]
I thought Gill began to croak, and travail full sad,
Well nigh at the first cock,—of a young lad,
For to mend our flock : then be I never glad.
To have two on my rock,—more than ever I had.

1 company. 2 Benedicite.
3 mad. 4 dream. 5 sloth (?)

Ah, my head !
A house full of young tharmes,[1]
The devil knock out their harnes ! [2]
Woe is he has many bairns,
And thereto little bread.
I must go home, by your leave, to Gill as I thought.
I pray you look my sleeve, that I steal nought :
I am loth you to grieve, or from you take aught.

3RD SHEPHERD : Go forth, ill might thou chefe,[3] now would I we sought,
This morn,
That we had all our store.

1ST SHEPHERD : But I will go before,
Let us meet.

2ND SHEPHERD : Whor ?[4]

3RD SHEPHERD : At the crooked thorn.

MAC (*at his own door again*) : Undo this door ! who is here ?
How long shall I stand ?

WIFE : Who makes such a stir ?—Now walk in the wenyand.[5]

MAC : Ah, Gill, what cheer ?—It is I, Mac, your husband.

HIS WIFE : Then may we be here,—the devil in a band,
Sir Gile.
Lo, he commys[6] with a lot,
As he were holden in the throat.
I may not sit, work or not
A hand long while.

MAC : Will ye hear what fare she makes—to get her a glose,[7]
And do naught but lakes [8]—and close her toes.

WIFE : Why, who wanders, who wakes,—who comes, who goes ?
Who brews, who bakes ? Who makes for me this hose ?
And then
It is ruth to behold,
Now in hot, now in cold,
Full woful is the household
That wants a woman.
But what end hast thou made with the herds, Mac ?

MAC : The last word that they said,—when I turned my back,
They would look that they had—their sheep all the pack.
I hope they will not be well paid,—when they their sheep lack.
Perdie !
But howso the game goes,
To me they will suppose,
And make a foul noise,
And cry out upon me.
But thou must do as thou hight,

WIFE : I accord me thertylle.[9]
I shall swaddle him right in my cradle.
If it were a greater slight, yet could I help till.
I will lie down straight. Come hap me.

1 bellies. 2 brains. 3 prosper.
4 where. 5 waning moon. 6 comes.
7 lie. 8 plays. 9 thereto.

MAC : I will.
WIFE : Behind,
Come Coll and his marrow,
They will nip us full narrow.
MAC : But I may cry out "Harro!" [1]
The sheep if they find.

WIFE : Hearken aye when they call : they will come anon.
Come and make ready all, and sing by thine own,
Sing "Lullay!" thou shall, for I must groan,
And cry out by the wall on Mary and John,
For sore.
Sing "Lullay" full fast
When thou hears at the last ;
And but I play a false cast
Trust me no more.

[*Re-enter the* THREE SHEPHERDS.

3RD SHEPHERD : Ah, Coll ! good morn :—why sleepest thou not?
1ST SHEPHERD : Alas, that ever was I born !—we have a foul blot.
A fat wether have we lorne.[2]
3RD SHEPHERD : Marry, Godys forbot![3]
2ND SHEPHERD : Who should do us that scorn? That were a foul spot.
1ST SHEPHERD : Some shrew.
I have sought with my dogs,
All Horbery shrogs,[4]
And of fifteen hogs
Found I but one ewe.
3RD SHEPHERD : Now trust me if you will ;—by Saint Thomas of Kent!
Either Mac or Gill—was at that assent.
1ST SHEPHERD : Peace, man, be still ;—I saw when he went.
Thou slander'st him ill ; thou ought to repent.
Good speed.
2ND SHEPHERD : Now as ever might I thee,
If I should even here dee,[5]
I would say it were he,
That did that same deed.
3RD SHEPHERD : Go we thither I rede [6]—and run on our feet.
May I never eat bread,—the truth till I wit.
1ST SHEPHERD : Nor drink, in my heed,—with him till I meet.
2ND SHEPHERD : I will rest in no stead, till that I him greet,
My brother
One I will hight :[7]
Till I see him in sight
Shall I never sleep one night
There I do another.
3RD SHEPHERD : Will ye hear how they hack,[8]—Our Sire! list, how they croon!

1 Help! or Halloo! 2 lost. 3 God forbid.
4 Horbery Shrubberies, near Wakefield. 5 die. 6 advise.
7 call. 8 "take on," make game.

1ST SHEPHERD : Hard I never none crack,—so clear out of tune.
Call on him.
2ND SHEPHERD : Mac ! undo your door soon.
MAC : Who is it that spoke,—as it were noon ?
On loft,
Who is that I say ?
3RD SHEPHERD : Good fellows ! were it day ?
MAC : As far as ye may,—
Good, speak ye soft !
Over a sick woman's head,—that is ill mate ease,
I had liefer be dead,—or she had any disease.
WIFE : Go to another stead ; I may not well queasse [1]
Each foot that ye tread—goes near make me sneeze [2]
So he !
1ST SHEPHERD : Tell us, Mac, if ye may,
How fare ye, I say ?
MAC : But are ye in this town to-day ?
Now how fare ye ?
Ye have run in the mire, and are wet yit :
I shall make you a fire, if ye will sit.
A horse would I hire ; think ye on it.
Well quit is my hire, my dream—this is it.
A season.
I have bairns if ye knew,
Well more than enew, [3]
But we must drink as we brew,
And that is but reason.
I would ye dined e'er ye yode : [4] methink that ye sweat.
2ND SHEPHERD : Nay, neither mends our mode, drink nor meat.
MAC : Why, sir, ails you aught, but good ?
3RD SHEPHERD : Yes, our sheep that we gat,
Are stolen as they yode. [5] Our loss is great.
MAC : Sirs, drinkýs !
Had I been there,
Some should have bought it full dear.
1ST SHEPHERD : Marry, some men trows that ye were,
And that us forethinkýs. [6]
2ND SHEPHERD : Mac, some men trows that it should be ye.
3RD SHEPHERD : Either ye or your spouse ; so say we.
MAC : Now if ye have suspouse [7] to Gill or to me,
Come and rip our house, and then may ye see
Who had her.
If I any sheep got,
Either cow or stot,
And Gill, my wife rose not
Here since she laid her.
As I am both true and leal, to God here I pray,
That this be the first meal, I shall eat this day.

1 breathe. 2 nose (?) The " so he " is meant for a she.
3 enow, enough. 4 went. 5 went, were grazing.
6 bothers us, makes us suspect. 7 suspicion.

1ST SHEPHERD : Mac, as I have weal, arise thee, I say !
" He learned timely to steal, that could not say nay."
WIFE : I swelt.[1]
Out thieves from my once !
Ye come to rob us for the nonce.
MAC : Hear ye not how she groans ?
Your heart should melt.
WIFE : Out thieves, from my bairn ! Nigh him not thore.
MAC : Knew ye how she had farne,[2] your hearts would be sore.
Ye do wrong, I you warn, that thus commys before
To a woman that has farn ;[3] but I say no more.
WIFE : Ah, my middle !
I pray to God so mild,
If ever I you beguiled,
That I eat this child,
That lies in this cradle.
MAC : Peace, woman, for God's pain, and cry not so :
Thou spill'st thy brain, and mak'st me full woe.
2ND SHEPHERD : I know our sheep be slain, what find ye too ?
3RD SHEPHERD : All work we in vain : as well may we go.
But hatters.[4]
I can find no flesh,
Hard nor nesh,[5]
Salt nor fresh,
But two tome[6] platters :
No cattle but this, tame nor wild,
None, as have I bliss ; as loud as he smiled.
WIFE : No, so God me bliss, and give me joy of my child.
1ST SHEPHERD : We have markëd amiss : I hold us beguiled.
2ND SHEPHERD : Sir, done !
Sir, our lady him save,
Is your child a knave ?[7]
MAC : Any lord might him have
This child to his son.
When he wakens he skips, that joy is to see.
3RD SHEPHERD : In good time, be his steps, and happy they be !
But who was his gossips, tell now to me !
MAC : So fair fall their lips !
1ST SHEPHERD (*aside*) : Hark now, a lee[8]
MAC : So God them thank,
Parkin, and Gibbon Waller, I say,
And gentle John Horne, in good fay,[9]
He made all the garray,[10]
With the great shank.
2ND SHEPHERD : Mac, friends will we be, for we are all one.
MAC : Why ! now I hold for me, for help get I none.
Farewell all three : all glad were ye gone.
3RD SHEPHERD : Fair words may there be, but love there is none.
1ST SHEPHERD : Gave ye the child anything ?

1 swelter. 2 fared. 3 been in labour. 4 confound it.
5 soft. 6 empty. 7 a boy. 8 a lie.
9 faith. 10 hubbub.

2ND SHEPHERD : I trust not one farthing.
3RD SHEPHERD : Fast again will I fling,
Abide ye me there. [*He returns to* MAC's *cot.*
Mac, take it to no grief, if I come to thy barn.
MAC : Nay, thou dost me great reprieve, and foul hast thou farne.[1]
3RD SHEPHERD : The child will it not grieve, that little day starn.[2]
Mac, with your leave, let me give your bairn,
But sixpence.
MAC : Nay, go 'way : he sleepys.
3RD SHEPHERD : Methink he peepys.
MAC : When he wakens he weepys.
I pray you go hence.
3RD SHEPHERD : Give me leave him to kiss, and lift up the clout.
What the devil is this ? He has a long snout.
1ST SHEPHERD : He is marked amiss. We wait ill about.
2ND SHEPHERD : Ill spun weft, I wis, aye cometh foul out ;
Aye so :
He is like to our sheep.
3RD SHEPHERD : How, Gib, may I peep ?
1ST SHEPHERD : I trow, kind will creep,
Where it may not go.
2ND SHEPHERD : This was a quaint gaud,[3] and a far cast
It was a high fraud.
3RD SHEPHERD : Yea, sirs, was't.
Let burn this bawd and bind her fast.
A false skawd[4] hangs at the last ;
So shall thou.
Will ye see how they swaddle
His four feet in the middle ?
Saw I never in a cradle
A hornëd lad e'er now.
MAC : Peace bid I : what ! let be your fare ;
I am he that him gat, and yond woman him bare.
1ST SHEPHERD : What devil shall he halt ?[5] Mac, lo, God makes air.
2ND SHEPHERD : Let be all that. Now God give him care !
I sagh.[6]
WIFE : A pretty child is he,
As sits upon a woman's knee ;
A dylly-downe, perdie !
To make a man laugh.
3RD SHEPHERD : I know him by the ear mark :—that is a good token.
MAC : I tell you, sirs, hark :—his nose was broken.
Since then, told me a clerk,—that he was forespoken.[7]
1ST SHEPHERD : This is a false work.—I would fain be wroken : [8]
Get a weapon !

[1] done. [2] day-star.
[3] gem, something prankt out, or shown off, like a false gem. [4] scold.
[5] hight, be called. [6] say. [7] bewitched. [8] be avenged, wreak vengeance.

WIFE : He was taken by an elf ; [1]
I saw it myself.
When the clock struck twelve,
Was he mis-shapen.
2ND SHEPHERD : Ye two are right deft,—same in a stead.
3RD SHEPHERD : Since they maintain their theft,—let's do them to dead.
MAC : If I trespass eft, gird off my head.
With you will I be left.
1ST SHEPHERD : Sirs, do my red
For this trespass,
We will neither ban nor flyte[2]
Fight, nor chyte,[3]
But seize him tight,
And cast him in canvas.

[*They toss* MAC *for his sins.*

. . . . . .

1ST SHEPHERD (*as the three return to the fold*) : Lord, how I am sore, in point for to tryst :
In faith I may no more, therefore will I rest.
2ND SHEPHERD : As a sheep of seven score, he weighed in my fist.
For to sleep anywhere, methink that I list.
3RD SHEPHERD : Now I pray you,
Lie down on this green.
1ST SHEPHERD : On these thefts yet I mean.
3RD SHEPHERD : Whereto should ye tene ? [4]
Do as I say you.
[*Enter an* ANGEL *above, who sings "Gloria in Exelsis," then says :*
Rise, hired-men, heynd,[5] for now is he born
That shall take from the fiend, that Adam had lorn : [6]
That warlock to sheynd,[7] this night is he born.
God is made your friend : now at this morn,
He behests ;
To Bedlem go see,
There lies that free [8]
In a crib full poorly,
Betwixt two beasts.
1ST SHEPHERD : This was a quaint stevyn [9] that ever yet I heard.
It is a marvel to nevyn[10] thus to be scared.
2ND SHEPHERD : Of God's son of heaven, he spoke up word.
All the wood like the levin,[11] methought that he gard Appear.
3RD SHEPHERD : He spoke of a bairn
In Bedlem I you warn.
1ST SHEPHERD : That betokens yonder starn [12]
Let us seek him there.

1 *i.e.* for a changeling. 2 curse nor flout. 3 chide.
4 vex about it. 5 gracious. 6 lost. 7 destroy.
8 free, or divine, One. 9 voice. 10 name, relate.
11 lightning. 12 star.

2ND SHEPHERD : Say, what was his song ? Heard ye not how
he cracked it ?
Three breves to a long.[1]
3RD SHEPHERD : Yea, marry, he hacked[2] it.
Was no crochet wrong, nor no thing that lacked it.
1ST SHEPHERD : For to sing us among, right as he knacked it,
I can.
2ND SHEPHERD : Let us see how ye croon
Can ye bark at the moon ?
3RD SHEPHERD : Hold your tongues, have done.
1ST SHEPHERD : Hark after, then.
2ND SHEPHERD : To Bedlem he bade—that we should gang :
I am full feared—that we tarry too lang.
3RD SHEPHERD : Be merry and not sad : of mirth is our sang,
Everlasting glad, our road may we fang,[3]
Without noise.
1ST SHEPHERD : Hie we thither quickly ;
If we be wet and weary,
To that child and that lady
We have it not to slose.[4]
2ND SHEPHERD : We find by the prophecy—let be your din—
Of David and Esai, and more than I min ;[5]
They prophesied by clergy, that on a virgin
Should he light and ly, to pardon our sin
And slake it,
Our kind from woe ;
For Esai said so,
Cite virgo
Concipiet a child that is naked.
3RD SHEPHERD : Full glad may we be,—and abide that day
That lovely to see,—that all mights may.
Lord, well for me,—for once and for aye,
Might I kneel on my knee—some word for to say
To that child.
But the angel said
In a crib was he laid ;
He was poorly arrayed,
Both meaner and mild.
1ST SHEPHERD : Patriarchs that have been,—and prophets
beforn,
They desired to have seen—this child that is born.
They are gone full clean,—that have they lorn.
We shall see him, I ween,—e'er it be morn
By token
When I see him and feel,
Then know I full weel
It is true as steel
That prophets have spoken.
To so poor as we are, that he would appear,
First find, and declare by his messenger.
2ND SHEPHERD : Go we now, let us fare : the place is us near.

1 three short notes to a long one. 2 shouted it out.
3 take. 4 delay. 5 can mind.

3RD SHEPHERD : I am ready and yare :[1] go we in fear
To that light !
Lord ! if thy wills be,
We are lewd [2] all three,
Thou grant us of thy glee,[3]
To comfort thy wight.

. . . . . .

[*The* SHEPHERDS *arrive at Bethlehem.*

1ST SHEPHERD : Hail, comely and clean ; hail, young child !
Hail, maker, as I mean, of a maiden so mild !
Thou hast wared, I ween, off the warlock [4] so wild,
The false guiler of teen,[5] now goes he beguiled.
Lo, he merry is !
Lo, he laughs, my sweeting;
A welcome meeting !
I have given my greeting
Have a bob of cherries ?

2ND SHEPHERD : Hail, sovereign saviour, for thou hast us sought !
Hail freely, leaf and flow'r, that all thing has wrought !
Hail full of favour, that made all of nought !
Hail ! I kneel and I cower. A bird have I brought
To my bairn !
Hail, little tiny mop,[6]
Of our creed thou are crop !
I would drink in thy cup,
Little day-starn.[7]

3RD SHEPHERD : Hail, darling dear, full of godheed !
I pray thee be near, when that I have need.
Hail ! sweet is thy cheer : my heart would bleed
To see thee sit here in so poor weed.
With no pennies.
Hail ! put forth thy dall !—[8]
I bring thee but a ball
Have and play thee with all,
And go to the tennis.

MARY : The Father of Heaven, God omnipotent,
That set all on levin,[9] his son has he sent.
My name could he neven,[10] and laught as he went.[11]
I conceived him full even, through might, as God meant;
And new is he born.
He keep you from woe :
I shall pray him so ;
Tell forth as ye go,
And mind on this morn.

1ST SHEPHERD : Farewell, lady, so fair to behold,
With thy child on thy knee.

2ND SHEPHERD : But he lies full cold,
Lord, well is me : now we go forth, behold !

1 eager. 2 unlearn'd, rude. 3 happiness. 4 demon, evil one.
5 worker of evil. The " he " in the next line refers to the Holy Babe again.
6 pate, little tiny-pate. 7 day-star. 8 hand.
9 set all alight ; gave light to all. 10 could he (*i.e.* the babe) tell, name.
11 weened ; *i.e.* laughed as if he knew all about it.

3RD SHEPHERD : Forsooth, already it seems to be told
Full oft.
1ST SHEPHERD : What grace we have fun.[1]
2ND SHEPHERD : Come forth, now are we won.
3RD SHEPHERD : To sing are we bun :[2]
Let take on loft.[3]

15th Century

EVERYMAN

(AUTHOR UNKNOWN)

Mediæval European culture was largely cosmopolitan. Mystery-Miracle drama in one form or another was common to all nations acknowledging allegiance to the Church from which it sprang. It was yet essentially provincial. With the "moral play," or Morality, which presently emerged, the local interest is extended, and one play at least breaks the bounds not only of dialect, but of national language. There are two versions of *Everyman*, one of which, in Dutch, was published in 1495. It is generally believed that the English version is the earlier. Anyway, it is not a translation in the ordinary sense of the word.

The Morality, while restricted to an allegorical action and a didactic motive, stimulated the invention of original plots and definite character-types. It was a transitional form. Most of the surviving examples are earnest to deadliness, of mere academic interest. *Everyman* is unique—a masterpiece of inspired sincerity. Nothing is known about the author.

EVERYMAN

Characters

EVERYMAN	FELLOWSHIP	GOOD-DEEDS	BEAUTY
GOD : ADONAI	COUSIN	STRENGTH	KNOWLEDGE
DEATH	KINDRED	DISCRETION	CONFESSION
MESSENGER	GOODS	FIVE-WITS	ANGEL
		DOCTOR	

Here beginneth a treatise how the High Father of Heaven sendeth Death to summon every creature to come and give account of their lives in this world and is in manner of a Moral Play.

MESSENGER : I pray you all give your audience,
And hear this matter with reverence,
By figure a moral play—
The *Summoning of Everyman* called it is,
That of our lives and ending shows
How transitory we be all day.
This matter is wondrous precious,
But the intent of it is more gracious,
And sweet to bear away.
The story saith,—Man, in the beginning,
Look well, and take good heed to the ending,

[1] found. [2] bound. [3] Let us sing it aloft, or aloud!

Be you never so gay !
Ye think sin in the beginning full sweet,
Which in the end causeth thy soul to weep,
When the body lieth in clay.
Here shall you see how *Fellowship* and *Jollity*,
Both *Strength*, *Pleasure*, and *Beauty*,
Will fade from thee as flower in May.
For ye shall hear, how our heaven king
Calleth *Everyman* to a general reckoning :
Give audience, and hear what he doth say.

God : I perceive here in my majesty,
How that all creatures be to me unkind,
Living without dread in worldly prosperity :
Of ghostly sight the people be so blind,
Drowned in sin, they know me not for their God ;
In worldly riches is all their mind,
They fear not my rightwiseness, the sharp rod ;
My law that I showed, when I for them died,
They forget clean, and shedding of my blood red ;
I hanged between two, it cannot be denied ;
To get them life I suffered to be dead ;
I healed their feet, with thorns hurt was my head :
I could do no more than I did truly,
And now I see the people do clean forsake me.
They use the seven deadly sins damnable ;
As pride, covetise, wrath, and lechery,
Now in the world be made commendable ;
And thus they leave of angels the heavenly company ;
Everyman liveth so after his own pleasure,
And yet of their life they be nothing sure :
I see the more that I them forbear
The worse they be from year to year ;
All that liveth appaireth[1] fast,
Therefore I will in all the haste
Have a reckoning of Everyman's person
For and I leave the people thus alone
In their life and wicked tempests,
Verily they will become much worse than beasts ;
For now one would by envy another up eat ;
Charity they all do clean forget.
I hoped well that Everyman
In my glory should make his mansion,
And thereto I had them all elect ;
But now I see, like traitors deject,
They thank me not for the pleasure that I to them meant,
Nor yet for their being that I them have lent ;
I proffered the people great multitude of mercy,
And few there be that asketh it heartily ;
They be so cumbered with worldly riches,
That needs on them I must do justice,
On Everyman living without fear.
Where art thou, *Death*, thou mighty messenger ?

[1] is impaired.

DEATH : Almighty God, I am here at your will,
Your commandment to fulfil.

GOD : Go thou to *Everyman*,
And show him in my name
A pilgrimage he must on him take,
Which he in no wise may escape ;
And that he bring with him a sure reckoning
Without delay or any tarrying.

DEATH : Lord, I will in the world go run over all,
And cruelly outsearch both great and small ;
Everyman will I beset that liveth beastly
Out of God's laws, and dreadeth not folly :
He that loveth riches I will strike with my dart,
His sight to blind, and from heaven to depart,
Except that alms be his good friend,
In hell for to dwell, world without end.
Lo, yonder I see *Everyman* walking ;
Full little he thinketh on my coming ;
His mind is on fleshly lusts and his treasure,
And great pain it shall cause him to endure
Before the Lord Heaven King.
Everyman, stand still ; whither art thou going
Thus gaily ? Hast thou thy Maker forget ?

EVERYMAN : Why askst thou ?
Wouldest thou wete ? [1]

DEATH : Yea, sir, I will show you ;
In great haste I am sent to thee
From God out of his majesty.

EVERYMAN : What, sent to me ?

DEATH : Yea, certainly.
Though thou have forget him here,
He thinketh on thee in the heavenly sphere,
As, or we depart, thou shalt know.

EVERYMAN : What desireth God of me ?

DEATH : That shall I show thee ;
A reckoning he will needs have
Without any longer respite.

EVERYMAN : To give a reckoning longer leisure I crave ;
This blind matter troubleth my wit.

DEATH : On thee thou must take a long journey :
Therefore thy book of count with thee thou bring ;
For turn again thou can not by no way,
And look thou be sure of thy reckoning :
For before God thou shalt answer, and show
Thy many bad deeds and good but a few ;
How thou hast spent thy life, and in what wise,
Before the chief lord of paradise.
Have ado that we were in that way.
For, wete thou well, thou shalt make none attournay.[2]

EVERYMAN : Full unready I am such reckoning to give.
I know thee not : what messenger art thou ?

1 know. 2 mediator.

DEATH : I am *Death*, that no man dreadeth.
For every man I rest and no man spareth ;
For it is God's commandment
That all to me should be obedient.
EVERYMAN : O *Death*, thou comest when I had thee least in mind ;
In thy power it lieth me to save,
Yet of my good will I give thee, if ye will be kind,
Yea, a thousand pound shalt thou have,
And defer this matter till another day.
DEATH : *Everyman*, it may not be by no way ;
I set not by gold, silver, nor riches,
Ne by pope, emperor, king, duke, ne princes.
For and I would receive gifts great,
All the world I might get ;
But my custom is clean contrary.
I give thee no respite : come hence, and not tarry.
EVERYMAN : Alas, shall I have no longer respite ?
I may say *Death* giveth no warning :
To think on thee, it maketh my heart sick,
For all unready is my book of reckoning.
But twelve year and I might have abiding,
My counting book I would make so clear,
That my reckoning I should not need to fear.
Wherefore, *Death*, I pray thee, for God's mercy,
Spare me till I be provided of remedy.
DEATH : Thee availeth not to cry, weep, and pray :
But haste thee lightly that you were gone the journey,
And prove thy friends if thou can.
For, wete thou well, the tide abideth no man,
And in the world each living creature
For *Adam's* sin must die of nature.
EVERYMAN : *Death*, if I should this pilgrimage take,
And my reckoning surely make,
Show me, for saint *charity*,
Should I not come again shortly ?
DEATH : No, *Everyman* ; and thou be once there,
Thou mayst never more come here,
Trust me verily.
EVERYMAN : O gracious God, in the high seat celestial,
Have mercy on me in this most need ;
Shall I have no company from this vale terrestrial
Of mine acquaintance that way me to lead ?
DEATH : Yea, if any be so hardy,
That would go with thee and bear thee company.
Hie thee that you were gone to God's magnificence,
Thy reckoning to give before his presence.
What, weenest thou thy life is given thee,
And thy worldly goods also ?
EVERYMAN : I had wend so, verily.
DEATH : Nay, nay ; it was but lent thee ;
For as soon as thou art go,
Another awhile shall have it, and then go therefro
Even as thou hast done.

Everyman, thou art mad ; thou hast thy wits five,
And here on earth will not amend thy life,
For suddenly I do come.

EVERYMAN : O wretched caitiff, whither shall I flee,
That I might scape this endless sorrow !
Now, gentle *Death*, spare me till to-morrow,
That I may amend me
With good advisement.

DEATH : Nay, thereto, I will not consent,
Nor no man will I respite,
But to the heart suddenly I shall smite
Without any advisement.
And now out of thy sight I will me hie ;
See thou make thee ready shortly,
For thou mayst say this is the day
That no man living may scape away.

EVERYMAN : Alas, I may well weep with sighs deep :
Now have I no manner of company
To help me in my journey, and me to keep ;
And also my writing is full unready.
How shall I do now for to excuse me ?
I would to God I had never be gete ! [1]
To my soul a full great profit it had be ;
For now I fear pains huge and great.
The time passeth : Lord, help that all wrought ;
For though I mourn it availeth nought.
The day passeth, and is almost a-go ;
I wot not well what for to do.
To whom were I best my complaint to make ?
What, and I to *Fellowship* thereof spake,
And showed him of this sudden chance ?
For in him is all mine affiance ;
We have in the world so many a day
Be on good friends in sport and play.
I see him yonder, certainly ;
I trust that he will bear me company ;
Therefore to him will I speak to ease my sorrow.
Well met, good *Fellowship*, and good morrow !

FELLOWSHIP *speaketh* : *Everyman*, good morrow by this day.
Sir, why lookest thou so piteously ?
If any thing be amiss, I pray thee, me say,
That I may help to remedy.

EVERYMAN : Yea, good *Fellowship*, yea,
I am in great jeopardy.

FELLOWSHIP : My true friend, show to me your mind
I will not forsake thee, unto my life's end,
In the way of good company.

EVERYMAN : That was well spoken, and lovingly.

FELLOWSHIP : Sir, I must needs know your heaviness ;
I have pity to see you in any distress ;
If any have you wronged ye shall revenged be.
Though I on the ground be slain for thee, –
Though that I know before that I should die.

[1] been gotten, been born.

EVERYMAN : Verily, *Fellowship*, gramercy.
FELLOWSHIP : Tush ! by thy thanks I set not a straw.
Show me your grief, and say no more.
EVERYMAN ; If I my heart should to you break,
And then you to turn your mind from me,
And would not me comfort, when you hear me speak,
Then should I ten times sorrier be.
FELLOWSHIP : Sir, I say as I will do in deed.
EVERYMAN : Then be you a good friend at need :
I have found you true here before.
FELLOWSHIP : And so ye shall evermore ;
For, in faith, and thou go to Hell.
I will not forsake thee by the way !
EVERYMAN : Ye speak like a good friend ; I believe you well ;
I shall deserve it, and I may.
FELLOWSHIP : I speak of no deserving, by this day.
For he that will say and nothing do
Is not worthy with good company to go ;
Therefore show me the grief of your mind,
As to your friend most loving and kind.
EVERYMAN : I shall show you how it is ;
Commanded I am to go a journey,
A long way, hard and dangerous,
And give a strait count without delay
Before the high judge Adonai.[1]
Wherefore I pray you, bear me company,
As ye have promised, in this journey.
FELLOWSHIP : That is matter indeed ! Promise is duty,
But, and I should take such a voyage on me,
I know it well, it should be to my pain :
Also it make me afeard, certain.
But let us take counsel here as well as we can,
For your words would fear a strong man.
EVERYMAN : Why, ye said, If I had need,
Ye would me never forsake, quick nor dead,
Though it were to hell truly.
FELLOWSHIP : So I said, certainly,
But such pleasures be set aside, thee sooth to say :
And also, if we took such a journey,
When should we come again ?
EVERYMAN : Nay, never again till the day of doom.
FELLOWSHIP : In faith, then will not I come there !
Who hath you these tidings brought ?
EVERYMAN : Indeed, *Death* was with me here.
FELLOWSHIP : Now, by God that all hath bought,
If *Death* were the messenger,
For no man that is living to-day
I will not go that loath journey—
Not for the father that begat me !
EVERYMAN : Ye promised other wise, pardie.
FELLOWSHIP : I wot well I say so truly ;
And yet if thou wilt eat, and drink, and make good cheer,

[1] God.

Or haunt to women, the lusty company,
I would not forsake you, while the day is clear,
Trust me verily !

EVERYMAN : Yea, thereto ye would be ready ;
To go to mirth, solace, and play,
Your mind will sooner apply
Than to bear me company in my long journey.

FELLOWSHIP : Now, in good faith, I will not that way.
But and thou wilt murder, or any man kill,
In that I will help thee with a good will !

EVERYMAN : O that is a simple advice indeed !
Gentle *fellow*, help me in my necessity ;
We have loved long, and now I need,
And now, gentle *Fellowship*, remember me.

FELLOWSHIP : Whether ye have loved me or no,
By Saint John, I will not with thee go.

EVERYMAN : Yet I pray thee, take the labour, and do so much for me
To bring me forward, for saint charity,
And comfort me till I come without the town.

FELLOWSHIP : Nay, and thou would give me a new gown,
I will not a foot with thee go ;
But and you had tarried I would not have have left thee so.
And as now, God speed thee in thy journey,
For from thee I will depart as fast as I may.

EVERYMAN : Whither away, *Fellowship* ? will you forsake me ?

FELLOWSHIP : Yea, by my fay, to God I betake thee.

EVERYMAN : Farewell, good *Fellowship* ; for this my heart is sore ;
Adieu for ever, I shall see thee no more.

FELLOWSHIP : In faith, *Everyman*, farewell now at the end ;
For you I will remember that parting is mourning.

EVERYMAN : Alack ! shall we thus depart indeed ?
Our Lady, help, without any more comfort,
Lo, *Fellowship* forsaketh me in my most need :
For help in this world whither shall I resort ?
Fellowship herebefore with me would merry make ;
And now little sorrow for me doth he take.
It is said, in prosperity men friends may find,
Which in adversity be full unkind.
Now whither for succour shall I flee,
Sith that *Fellowship* hath forsaken me ?
To my kinsmen I will truly,
Praying them to help me in my necessity :
I believe that they will do so,
For kind will creep where it may not go.
I will go say, for yonder I see them go.
Where be ye now, my friends and kinsmen ?

KINDRED : Here be we now at your commandment.
Cousin, I pray you show us your intent
In any wise, and not spare.

COUSIN : Yea, *Everyman*, and to us declare
If ye be disposed to go any whither,
For wete you well, we will live and die together.

KINDRED : In wealth and woe we will with you hold,
For over his kin a man may be bold.
EVERYMAN : Gramercy, my friends and kinsmen kind.
Now shall I show you the grief of my mind :
I was commanded by a messenger,
That is an high king's chief officer ;
He bade me go a pilgrimage to my pain,
And I know well I shall never come again ;
Also I must give a reckoning straight,
For I have a great enemy, that hath me in wait,
Which intendeth me for to hinder.
KINDRED : What account is that which ye must render ?
That would I know.
EVERYMAN : Of all my works I must show
How I have lived and my days spent ;
Also of ill deeds, that I have used
In my time, sith life was me lent ;
And of all virtues that I have refused.
Therefore I pray you go thither with me,
To help to make mine account, for saint *charity*.
COUSIN : What, to go thither ? Is that the matter ?
Nay, *Everyman*, I had liefer fast bread and water
All this five year and more.
EVERYMAN : Alas, that ever I was bore ![1]
For now shall I never be merry
If that you forsake me.
KINDRED : Ah, sir ; what, ye be a merry man !
Take good heart to you, and make no moan.
But one thing I warn you, by Saint Anne,
As for me, ye shall go alone.
EVERYMAN : My *Cousin*, will you not with me go ?
COUSIN : No, by our Lady ; I have the cramp in my toe.
Trust not to me, for, so God me speed,
I will deceive you in your most need.
KINDRED : It availeth not us to tice.
Ye shall have my maid with all my heart ;
She loveth to go to feasts, there to be nice,
And to dance, and abroad to start :
I will give her leave to help you in that journey,
If that you and she may agree.
EVERYMAN : Now show me the very effect of your mind.
Will you go with me, or abide behind ?
KINDRED : Abide behind ? yea, that I will and I may !
Therefore farewell until another day.
EVERYMAN : How should I be merry or glad ?
For fair promises to me make,
But when I have most need, they me forsake.
I am deceived ; that maketh me sad.
COUSIN : Cousin *Everyman*, farewell now,
For verily I will not go with you ;
Also of mine own an unready reckoning
I have to account ; therefore I make tarrying.
Now, God keep thee, for now I go.

[1] born.

EVERYMAN : Ah, *Jesus*, is all come hereto ?
Lo, fair words maketh fools feign ;
They promise and nothing will do certain.
My kinsmen promised me faithfully
For to abide with me steadfastly,
And now fast away do they flee :
Even so *Fellowship* promised me.
What friend were best me of to provide ?
I lose my time here longer to abide.
Yet in my mind a thing there is ;—
All my life I have loved riches ;
If that my good now help me might,
He would make my heart full light.
I will speak to him in this distress.—
Where art thou, my *Goods* and riches ?
GOODS : Who calleth me ? *Everyman* ? what haste thou hast !
I lie here in corners, trussed and piled so high,
And in chests I am locked so fast,
Also sacked in bags, thou mayst see with thine eye,
I cannot stir ; in packs low I lie.
What would ye have, lightly me say.
EVERYMAN : Come hither, *Good*, in all the haste thou may
For of counsel I must desire thee.
GOODS : Sir, and ye in the world have trouble or adversity,
That can I help you to remedy shortly.
EVERYMAN : It is another disease that grieveth me ;
In this world it is not, I tell thee so.
I am sent for another way to go,
To give a straight account general
Before the highest *Jupiter* of all ;
And all my life I have had joy and pleasure in thee.
Therefore I pray thee go with me,
For peradventure, thou mayst before God Almighty
My reckoning help to clean and purify ;
For it is said ever among,
That money maketh all right that is wrong.
GOODS : Nay, *Everyman*, I sing another song,
I follow no man in such voyages ;
For and I went with thee
Thou shouldst fare much the worse for me ;
For because on me thou did set thy mind,
Thy reckoning I have made blotted and blind,
That thine account thou cannot make truly ;
And that hast thou for the love of me.
EVERYMAN : That would grieve me full sore,
When I should come to that fearful answer.
Up, let us go thither together.
GOODS : Nay, not so, I am too brittle, I may not endure ;
I will follow no man one foot, be ye sure.
EVERYMAN : Alas, I have thee loved, and had great pleasure
All my life-days on good and treasure.
GOODS : That is to thy damnation without lesing,
For my love is contrary to the love everlasting
But if thou had me loved moderately during,

As, to the poor give part of me,
Then shouldst thou not in this dolour be,
Nor in this great sorrow and care,

EVERYMAN : Lo, now was I deceived or I was ware,
And all I may wyte[1] my spending of time.

GOODS : What, weenest thou that I am thine ?

EVERYMAN : I had wend so.

GOODS : Nay, *Everyman*, I say no ;
As for a while I was lent thee,
A season thou hast had me in prosperity ;
My condition is man's soul to kill ;
If I save one, a thousand I do spill ;
Weenest thou that I will follow thee ?
Nay, from this world, not verily.

EVERYMAN : I had wend otherwise.

GOODS : Therefore to thy soul *Good* is a thief ;
For when thou art dead, this is my guise
Another to deceive in the same wise
As I have done thee, and all to his soul's reprief.

EVERYMAN : O false *Good*, cursed thou be !
Thou traitor to God, that hast deceived me,
And caught me in thy snare.

GOODS : Marry, thou brought thyself in care,
Whereof I am glad,
I must needs laugh, I cannot be sad.

EVERYMAN : Ah, *Good*, thou hast had long my heartly love ;
I gave thee that which should be the Lord's above.
But wilt thou not go with me in deed ?
I pray thee truth to say.

GOODS : No, so God me speed,
Therefore farewell, and have good day.

EVERYMAN : O, to whom shall I make my moan
For to go with me in that heavy journey ?
First *Fellowship* said he would with me gone ;
His words were very pleasant and gay,
But afterward he left me alone.
Then spake I to my kinsmen all in despair,
And also they gave me words fair,
They lacked no fair speaking,
But all forsake me in the ending.
Then went I to my *Goods* that I loved best,
In hope to have comfort, but there had I least ;
For my *Goods* sharply did me tell
That he bringeth many into hell.
Then of myself I was ashamed,
And so I am worthy to be blamed ;
Thus may I well myself hate.
Of whom shall I now counsel take ?
I think that I shall never speed
Till that I go to my *Good-Deed*,
But alas, she is so weak,
That she can neither go nor speak ;

[1] blame.

Yet will I venture on her now.—
My *Good-Deeds*, where be you?

GOOD-DEEDS: Here I lie cold in the ground;
Thy sins hath me sore bound,
That I cannot stir.

EVERYMAN: O, *Good-Deeds*, I stand in fear;
I must you pray of counsel,
For help now should come right well.

GOOD-DEEDS: *Everyman*, I have understanding
That ye be summoned account to make
Before *Messias*, of Jerusalem King;
And you do by me[1] that journey what[2] you will I take.

EVERYMAN: Therefore I come to you, my moan to make;
I pray you, that ye will go with me.

GOOD-DEEDS: I would full fain, but I cannot stand verily.

EVERYMAN: Why, is there anything on you fall?

GOOD-DEEDS: Yea, sir, I may thank you of all;
If ye had perfectly cheered me,
Your book of account now full ready had be.
Look, the books of your works and deeds eke;
Oh, see how they lie under the feet,
To your soul's heaviness.

EVERYMAN: Our Lord *Jesus*, help me!
For one letter here I can not see.

GOOD-DEEDS: There is a blind reckoning in time of distress!

EVERYMAN: *Good-Deeds*, I pray you, help me in this need,
Or else I am for ever damned indeed;
Therefore help me to make reckoning
Before the redeemer of all thing,
That king is, and was, and ever shall.

GOOD-DEEDS: *Everyman*, I am sorry of your fall,
And fain would I help you, and I were able.

EVERYMAN: *Good-Deeds*, your counsel I pray you give me.

GOOD-DEEDS: That shall I do verily;
Though that on my feet I may not go,
I have a sister, that shall with you also,
Called *Knowledge*, which shall with you abide,
To help you to make that dreadful reckoning.

KNOWLEDGE: *Everyman*, I will go with thee, and be thy guide,
In thy most need to go by thy side.

EVERYMAN: In good condition I am now in every thing,
And am wholly content with this good thing;
Thanked be God my Creator.

GOOD-DEEDS: And when he hath brought thee there,
Where thou shalt heal thee of thy smart,
Then go you with your reckoning and your *Good-Deeds* together
For to make you joyful at heart
Before the blessed Trinity.

EVERYMAN: My *Good-Deeds*, gramercy;
I am well content, certainly,
With your words sweet.

[1] If you go by me. [2] with.

KNOWLEDGE : Now go we together lovingly,
To *Confession*, that cleansing river.
EVERYMAN : For joy I weep ; I would we were there ;
But, I pray you, give me cognition
Where dwelleth that holy man, *Confession*.
KNOWLEDGE : In the house of salvation :
We shall find him in that place,
That shall us comfort by God's grace.
Lo, this is *Confession* ; kneel down and ask mercy,
For he is in good conceit with God Almighty.
EVERYMAN : O glorious fountain that all uncleanness doth clarify,
Wash from me the spots of vices unclean,
That on me no sin may be seen ;
I come with *Knowledge* for my redemption,
Repent with hearty and full contrition ;
For I am commanded a pilgrimage to take,
And great accounts before God to make.
Now, I pray you, *Shrift*, mother of Salvation,
Help my good deeds for my piteous exclamation.
CONFESSION : I know your sorrow well, *Everyman* ;
Because with *Knowledge* ye come to me,
I will you comfort as well as I can,
And a precious jewel I will give thee,
Called penance, wise voider of adversity ;
Therewith shall your body chastised be,
With abstinence and perseverance in God's service :
Here shall you receive that scourge of me,
Which is penance strong, that ye must endure,
To remember thy Saviour was scourged for thee
With sharp scourges, and suffered it patiently ;
So must thou, or thou scape that painful pilgrimage ;
Knowledge, keep him in this voyage,
And by that time *Good-Deeds* will be with thee.
But in any wise, be sure of mercy,
For your time draweth fast, and ye will saved be ;
Ask God mercy, and He will grant truly,
When with the scourge of penance man doth him bind
The oil of forgiveness then shall he find.
EVERYMAN : Thanked be God for his gracious work !
For now I will my penance begin ;
This hath rejoiced and lighted my heart,
Though the knots be painful and hard within.
KNOWLEDGE : *Everyman*, look your penance that ye fulfil,
What pain that ever it to you be,
And *Knowledge* shall give you counsel at will,
How your accounts ye shall make clearly.
EVERYMAN : O eternal God, O heavenly figure,
O way of rightwiseness, O goodly vision,
Which descended down in a virgin pure
Because he would *Everyman* redeem,
Which *Adam* forfeited by his disobedience :
O blessed Godhead, elect and high-divine,

Forgive my grievous offence ;
Here I cry thee mercy in this presence.
O ghostly treasure, O ransomer and redeemer
Of all the world, hope and conductor,
Mirror of joy, and founder of mercy,
Which illumineth heaven and earth thereby,
Hear my clamorous complaint, though it late be ;
Receive my prayers ; unworthy in this heavy life,
Though I be, a sinner most abominable,
Yet let my name be written in *Moses'* table ;
O *Mary*, pray to the Maker of all thing,
Me for to help at my ending,
And save me from the power of my enemy,
For *Death* assaileth me strongly ;
And, Lady, that I may by means of thy prayer
Of your Son's glory to be partaker,
By the means of his passion I it crave,
I beseech you, help my soul to save.—
Knowledge, give me the scourge of penance ;
My flesh therewith shall give a quittance :
I will now begin, if God give me grace.

KNOWLEDGE : *Everyman*, God give you time and space :
Thus I bequeath you in the hands of our Saviour,
Thus may you make your reckoning sure.

EVERYMAN : In the name of the Holy Trinity,
My body sore punished shall be :
Take this body for the sin of the flesh ;
Also thou delightest to go gay and fresh,
And in the way of damnation thou did me bring ;
Therefore suffer now strokes and punishing.
Now of penance I will wade the water clear,
To save me from purgatory, that sharp fire.

GOOD-DEEDS : I thank God, now I can walk and go ;
And am delivered of my sickness and woe.
Therefore with *Everyman* I will go, and not spare ;
His good works I will help him to declare.

KNOWLEDGE : Now, *Everyman*, be merry and glad ;
Your *Good-Deeds* cometh now ; ye may not be sad ;
Now is your *Good-Deeds* whole and sound,
Going upright upon the ground.

EVERYMAN : My heart is light, and shall be evermore ;
Now will I smite faster than I did before.

GOOD-DEEDS : *Everyman*, pilgrim, my special friend,
Blessed be thou without end ;
For thee is prepared the eternal glory.
Ye have me made whole and sound,
Therefore I will bide by thee in every stound.[1]

EVERYMAN : Welcome, my *Good-Deeds* ; now I hear thy voice,
I weep for very sweetness of love.

KNOWLEDGE : Be no more sad, but ever rejoice,
God seeth thy living in his throne above ;
Put on this garment to thy behove,

[1] season.

Which is wet with your tears,
Or else before God you may it miss,
When you to your journey's end come shall.

EVERYMAN : Gentle *Knowledge*, what do you it call ?

KNOWLEDGE : It is a garment of sorrow :
From pain it will you borrow ;
Contrition it is,
That getteth forgiveness ;
It pleaseth God passing well.

GOOD-DEEDS : *Everyman*, will you wear it for your heal ?

EVERYMAN : Now blessed be *Jesu, Mary's* Son !
For now have I on true contrition.
And let us go now without tarrying ;
Good-Deeds, have we clear our reckoning ?

GOOD-DEEDS : Yea, indeed I have it here.

EVERYMAN : Then I trust we need not fear ;
Now, friends, let us not part in twain.

KNOWLEDGE : Nay, Everyman, that will we not, certain.

GOOD-DEEDS : Yet must thou lead with thee
Three persons of great might.

EVERYMAN : Who should they be ?

GOOD-DEEDS : *Discretion* and *Strength* they hight,
And thy *Beauty* may not abide behind.

KNOWLEDGE : Also ye must call to mind
Your *Five-Wits* as for your counsellors.

GOOD-DEEDS : You must have them ready at all hours.

EVERYMAN : How shall I get them hither ?

KNOWLEDGE : You must call them all together,
And they will hear you incontinent.

EVERYMAN : My friends, come hither and be present,
Discretion, Strength, my *Five-Wits*, and *Beauty*.

BEAUTY : Here at your will we be all ready.
What will ye that we should do ?

GOOD-DEEDS : That ye would with *Everyman* go,
And help him in his pilgrimage,
Advise you, will ye with him or not in that voyage ?

STRENGTH : We will bring him all thither.
To his help and comfort, ye may believe me.

DISCRETION : So will we go with him all together.

EVERYMAN : Almighty God, loved thou be,
I give thee laud that I have hither brought
Strength, Discretion, Beauty, and *Five-Wits* ; lack I nought ;
And my *Good-Deeds*, with *Knowledge* clear,
All be in my company at my will here ;
I desire no more to my business.

STRENGTH : And I, *Strength*, will by you stand in distress.
Though thou would in battle fight on the ground.

FIVE-WITS : And though it were through the world round
We will not depart for sweet nor sour.

BEAUTY : No more will I unto death's hour,
Whatsoever thereof befall.

DISCRETION : *Everyman*, advise you first of all ;
Go with a good advisement and deliberation ;

We all give you virtuous monition
That all shall be well.

EVERYMAN : My friends, hearken what I will tell:
I pray God reward you in his heavenly sphere.
Now hearken, all that be here,
For I will make my testament
Here before you all present.
In alms half my good I will give with my hands twain
In the way of charity, with good intent,
And the other half still shall remain
In quiet to be returned there it ought to be.
This I do in despite of the fiend of hell
To go quite out of his peril
Ever after and this day.

KNOWLEDGE : *Everyman*, hearken what I say ;
Go to priesthood, I you advise,
And receive of him in any wise
The holy sacrament and ointment together ;
Then shortly see ye turn again hither ;
We will all abide you here.

FIVE-WITS : Yea, *Everyman*, hie you that ye ready were,
There is no emperor, king, duke, ne baron,
That of God hath commission,
As hath the least priest in the world being ;
For of the blessed sacraments pure and benign,
He beareth the keys and thereof hath the cure
For man's redemption, it is ever sure ;
Which God for our soul's medicine
Gave us out of his heart with great pine ;
Here in this transitory life, for thee and me
The blessed sacraments seven there be,
Baptism, confirmation, with priesthood good,
And the sacrament of God's precious flesh and blood,
Marriage, the holy extreme unction, and penance ;
These seven be good to have in remembrance,
Gracious sacraments of high divinity.

EVERYMAN : Fain would I receive that holy body
And meekly to my ghostly father I will go.

FIVE-WITS : *Everyman*, that is the best that ye can do :
God will you to salvation bring,
For priesthood exceedeth all other thing ;
To us Holy Scripture they do teach,
And converteth man from sin heaven to reach ;
God hath to them more power given,
Than to any angel that is in heaven ;
With five words he may consecrate
God's body in flesh and blood to make,
And handleth his maker between his hands ;
The priest bindeth and unbindeth all bands,
Both in earth and in heaven ;
Thou ministers all the sacraments seven ;
Though we kissed thy feet thou were worthy ;
Thou art surgeon that cureth sin deadly :

No remedy we find under God
But all only priesthood.
Everyman, God gave priests that dignity,
And setteth them in his stead among us to be ;
Thus be they above angels in degree.

KNOWLEDGE : If priests be good it is so surely ;
But when Jesus hanged on the cross with great smart
There he gave, out of his blessed heart,
The same sacrament in great torment :
He sold them not to us, that Lord Omnipotent.
Therefore Saint Peter the apostle doth say
That Jesu's curse hath all they
Which God their Saviour do buy or sell,
Or they for any money do take or tell.
Sinful priests giveth the sinners example bad ;
Their children sitteth by other men's fires, I have heard ;
And some haunteth women's company,
With unclean life, as lusts of lechery :
These be with sin made blind.

FIVE-WITS : I trust to God no such may we find ;
Therefore let us priesthood honour,
And follow their doctrine for our souls' succour ;
We be their sheep, and they shepherds be
By whom we all be kept in surety.
Peace, for yonder I see *Everyman* come,
Which hath made true satisfaction.

GOOD-DEEDS : Methinketh it is he indeed.

EVERYMAN : Now Jesu be our alder speed.[1]
I have received the sacrament for my redemption,
And then mine extreme unction :
Blessed be all they that counselled me to take it !
And now, friends, let us go without longer respite ;
I thank God that ye have tarried so long
Now set each of you on this rod your hand,
And shortly follow me :
I go before, there I would be ; God be our guide.

STRENGTH : *Everyman*, we will not from you go,
Till ye have gone this voyage long.

DISCRETION : I, *Discretion*, will bide by you also.

KNOWLEDGE : And though this pilgrimage be never so strong,
I will never part you fro :
Everyman, I will be as sure by thee
As ever I did by Judas Maccabee.

EVERYMAN : Alas, I am so faint I may not stand,
My limbs under me do fold ;
Friends, let us not turn again to this land,
Not for all the world's gold,
For into this cave must I creep
And turn to the earth and there to sleep.

BEAUTY : What, into this grave ? alas !

EVERYMAN : Yea, there shall you consume more and less.

BEAUTY : And what, should I smother here ?

[1] speed in help of all.

EVERYMAN : Yea, by my faith, and never more appear.
In this world live no more we shall,
But in heaven before the highest Lord of all.
BEAUTY : I cross out all this ; adieu by Saint *John* ;
I take my cap in my lap and am gone.
EVERYMAN : What, *Beauty*, whither will ye ?
BEAUTY : Peace, I am deaf ; I look not behind me,
Not and thou would give me all the gold in they chest.
EVERYMAN : Alas, whereto may I trust ?
Beauty goeth fast away hie ;
She promised with me to live and die.
STRENGTH : Everyman, I will thee also forsake and deny ;
Thy game liketh me not at all.
EVERYMAN : Why, then ye will forsake me all.
Sweet *Strength*, tarry a little space.
STRENGTH : Nay, sir, by the rood of grace
I will hie me from thee fast,
Though thou weep till thy heart brast.
EVERYMAN : Ye would ever bide by me, ye said.
STRENGTH : Yea, I have you far enough conveyed
Ye be old enough, I understand,
Your pilgrimage to take on hand ;
I repent me that I hither came.
EVERYMAN : *Strength*, you to displease I am to blame ;
Will you break promise that is debt ?
STRENGTH : In faith, I care not ;
Thou art but a fool to complain,
You spend your speech and waste your brain ;
Go thrust thee into the ground.
EVERYMAN : I had wend surer I should you have found.
He that trusteth in his *Strength*
She him deceiveth at the length.
Both *Strength* and *Beauty* forsaketh me,
Yet they promised me fair and lovingly.
DISCRETION : *Everyman*, I will after *Strength* be gone,
As for me I will leave you alone.
EVERYMAN : Why, *Discretion*, will ye forsake me ?
DISCRETION : Yea, in faith, I will go from thee,
For when *Strength* goeth before
I follow after evermore.
EVERYMAN : Yet, I pray thee, for the love of the Trinity,
Look in my grave once piteously.
DISCRETION : Nay, so nigh will I not come.
Farewell, every one !
EVERYMAN : O all thing faileth, save God alone ;
Beauty, *Strength*, and *Discretion* ;
For when *Death* bloweth his blast,
They all run from me full fast.
FIVE-WITS : *Everyman*, my leave now of thee I take ;
I will follow the other, for here I thee forsake.
EVERYMAN : Alas ! then may I wail and weep,
For I took you for my best friend.
FIVE-WITS : I will no longer thee keep ;
Now farewell, and there an end.

EVERYMAN : O Jesu, help, all hath forsaken me !
GOOD-DEEDS : Nay, *Everyman*, I will bide with thee,
I will not forsake thee indeed ;
Thou shalt find me a good friend at need.
EVERYMAN : Gramercy, *Good-Deeds* ; now may I true friends see ;
They have forsaken me every one ;
I loved them better than my *Good-Deeds* alone.
Knowledge, will ye forsake me also ?
KNOWLEDGE : Yea, *Everyman*, when ye to death do go :
But not yet for no manner of danger.
EVERYMAN : Gramercy, *Knowledge*, with all my heart.
KNOWLEDGE : Nay, yet I will not from hence depart,
Till I see where ye shall be come.
EVERYMAN : Methinketh, alas, that I must be gone,
To make my reckoning and my debts pay,
For I see my time is nigh spent away.
Take example, all ye that this do hear or see,
How they that I loved best do forsake me,
Except my *Good-Deeds* that bideth truly.
GOOD-DEEDS : All earthly things is but vanity :
Beauty, *Strength*, and *Discretion*, do man forsake,
Foolish friends and kinsmen, that fair spake,
All fleeth save *Good-Deeds*, and that am I.
EVERYMAN : Have mercy on me, God most mighty ;
And stand by me, thou Mother and Maid, holy *Mary*.
GOOD-DEEDS : Fear not, I will speak for thee.
EVERYMAN : Here I cry God mercy.
GOOD-DEEDS : Short our end, and minish our pain ;
Let us go and never come again.
EVERYMAN : Into thy hands, Lord, my soul I commend ;
Receive it, Lord, that it be not lost ;
As thou me boughtest, so me defend,
And save me from the fiend's boast,
That I may appear with that blessed host
That shall be saved at the day of doom.
In manus tuas—of might's most
For ever—*commendo spiritum meum*.
KNOWLEDGE : Now hath he suffered that we all shall endure ;
The *Good-Deeds* shall make all sure.
Now hath he made ending ;
Methinketh that I hear angels sing
And make great joy and melody,
Where *Everyman's* soul received shall be.
ANGEL : Come, excellent elect spouse to Jesu :
Hereabove thou shalt go
Because of thy singular virtue :
Now the soul is taken the body fro ;
Thy reckoning is crystal-clear.
Now shalt thou into the heavenly sphere,
Unto the which all ye shall come
That liveth well before the day of doom.

DOCTOR : This moral men may have in mind ;
Ye hearers, take it of worth, old and young,
And forsake pride, for he deceiveth you in the end.
And remember *Beauty*, *Five-Wits*, *Strength*, and *Discretion*,
They all at the last do *Everyman* forsake,
Save his *Good-Deeds*, there doth he take.
But beware, and they be small
Before God, he hath no help at all.
None excuse may be there for *Everyman* :
Alas, how shall he do then ?
For after death amends may no man make,
For then mercy and pity do him forsake.
If his reckoning be not clear when he do come,
God will say—*ite maledicti in ignem æternum.*
And he that hath his account whole and sound,
High in heaven he shall be crowned ;
Unto which place God bring us all thither
That we may live body and soul together.
Thereto help the Trinity,
Amen, say ye, for saint *Charity*.

THUS ENDETH THIS MORALL PLAY OF EVERYMAN.

1533

JOHN, TYB, AND THE CURATE

(By JOHN HEYWOOD)

From the moral interlude we pass to the merry interlude—from the straight conflict between good and evil to a more "intriguing" personal warfare between husband, wife, and *tertium quid*. The Church has lost the monopoly of drama ; the morality has declined into a medium for propaganda and is presently as such to be suppressed. The public has already elected its successor. Chaucer and the Continental humanists have prepared the way. The professional player, from the ranks of "rogues and vagabonds," now finds his services in demand, as well in the great halls of the nobility, as in the courtyards of public inns, and other convenient open spaces. Church and State, parent and prodigal, enter formally into hostilities, to remain bitterly estranged until in our own time enlightenment on both sides to some extent restores relations between them.

The piece that follows, the earliest extant English "triangle" play, is believed to be the work of John Heywood (*c.* 1497–1580), one of a group of pioneer secular dramatists, associated with Sir Thomas More, the author of *Utopia*, and an enthusiastic promoter of private semi-"professional" theatricals. Heywood's other plays—notably *The Play of the Wether* and *The Foure P's*—betray only too clearly their indebtedness to the form and content of the Morality. *John John* marks a definite emancipation from this cramping influence.

A MERRY PLAY

Between JOHN JOHN, *the husband*, TYB, *his wife*, and SIR JOHN, *the priest*

JOHN JOHN (*the Husband*) : God speed you, masters, every one,
Wot ye not whither my wife is gone?
I pray God the devil take her,
For all that I do I can not make her,
But she will go a gadding very much
Like an Antony pig with an old witch,
Which leadeth her about hither and thither ;
But, by our lady, I wot not whither.
But, by Gog's blood, were she come home
Unto this my house, by our lady of Crome,
I would beat her or that I drink.
Beat her, quotha? yea, that she shall stink!
And at every stroke lay her on the ground,
And train her by the hair about the house round.
I am even mad that I beat her not now,
But I shall reward her, hard[e]ly, well ynowe ;
There is never a wife between heaven and hell
Which was ever beaten half so well.
Beaten, quotha? yea, but what and she thereof die?
Then I may chance to be hanged shortly.
And when I have beaten her till she smoke,
And given her many a c. stroke,
Think ye that she will amend yet?
Nay, by our lady, the devil speed whit!
Therefore I will not beat her at all.
And shall I not beat her? no shall?
When she offendeth and doth amiss,
And keepeth not her house, as her duty is?
Shall I not beat her, if she do so?
Yes, by Cock's blood, that shall I do ;
I shall beat her and thwack her, I trow,
That she shall beshit the house for very woe.
But yet I think what my neighbour will say then,
He will say thus : " Whom chidest thou, John John? "
" Marry," will I say! " I chide my curst wife,
The veriest drab that ever bare life,
Which doth nothing but go and come,
And I can not make her keep her at home."
Then I think he will say by and by,
" Walk her coat, John John, and beat her hardly."
But then unto him mine answer shall be,
" The more I beat her the worse is she :
And worse and worse make her I shall."
He will say then, " beat her not at all."
" And why? " shall I say, " this would be wist,
Is she not mine to chastise as I list? "
But this is another point worst of all,
The folks will mock me when they hear me brawl ;
But for all that, shall I let therefore
To chastise my wife ever the more,

And to make her at home for to tarry?
Is not that well done? yes, by Saint Mary,
That is a point of an honest man
For to beat his wife well now and then.
Therefore I shall beat her, have ye no dread!
And I ought to beat her, till she be stark dead.
And why? by God, because it is my pleasure,
And if I should suffer her, I make you sure,
Nought should prevail me, nother staff nor waster
Within a while she would be my master.
Therefore I shall beat her by Cock's mother,
Both on the tone side and on the tother,
Before and behind; nought shall be her boot,
From the top of the head to the sole of the foot.
But, masters, for God's sake, do not entreat
For her, when that she shall be beat;
But, for God's passion let me alone,
And I shall thwack her that she shall groan:
Wherefore I beseech you, and heartily you pray,
And I beseech you say me not nay,
But that I may beat her for this ones;
And I shall beat her, by Cock's bones,
That she shall stink like a pole-cat;
But yet, by Gog's body, that need not,
For she will stink without any beating,
For every night once she giveth me an heating;
From her issueth such a stinking smoke,
That the savour thereof almost doth me choke.
But I shall beat her now, without fail;
I shall beat her top and tail,
Head, shoulders, arms, legs, and all,
I shall beat her, I trow that I shall;
And, by Gog's body, I tell you true,
I shall beat her till she be black and blue.
But where the devil trow ye she is gone?
I hold a noble she is with Sir John;
I fear I am beguiled alway,
But yet in faith I hope well nay;
Yet I almost enrage that I ne can
See the behaviour of our gentlewoman.
And yet, I think, thither as she doth go
Many an honest wife goeth thither also,
For to make some pastime and sport.
But then my wife so oft doth thither resort
That I fear she will make me wear a feather.
But yet I need not for to fear nether,
For he is her gossip, that is he.
But abide a while, yet let me see,
Where the devil hath our gossipry begone?
My wife had never child, daughter nor son.
Now if I forbid her that she go no more,
Yet will she go as she did before,
Or else will she choose some other place;
And then the matter is in as ill case.

But in faith all these words be in waste,
For I think the matter is done and past ;
And when she cometh home she will begin to chide,
But she shall have her payment stick by her side ;
For I shall order her, for all her brawling,
That she shall repent to go a catterwauling.

[*Enter* TYB.

TYB : Why, whom wilt thou beat, I say, thou knave ?
JOHN : Who, I, Tyb ? none, so God me save.
TYB : Yes, I heard thee say thou wouldst one beat.
JOHN : Marry, wife, it was stockfish in Thames Street,
Which will be good meat against Lent.
Why, Tyb, what hadst thou thought that I had meant ?
TYB : Marry, me thought I heard the bawling.
Wilt thou never leave this wawlyng
How the devil dost thou thy self behave ?
Shall we ever have this work, thou knave ?
JOHN : What ! wife, how sayst thou ? was it well guessed of me
That thou wouldst be come home in safety,
As soon as I had kindled a fire ?
Come warm thee, sweet Tyb, I thee require.
TYB : O, John John, I am afraid, by this light,
That I shall be sore sick this night.
JOHN (*aside*) : By Cock's soul, now I dare lay a swan
That she comes now straight from Sir John ;
For ever when she hath fetched of him a lick,
Then she comes home, and saith she is sick.
TYB : What sayst thou ?
JOHN : Marry, I say,
It is mete for a woman to go play
Abroad in the town for an hour or two.
TYB : Well, gentleman, go to, go to !
JOHN : Well, let us have no more debate.
TYB (*aside*) : If he do not fight, chide, and rate,
Brawl and fare as one that were frantic,
There is nothing that may him like.
JOHN (*aside*) : If that the parish priest, Sir John,
Did not see her now and then,
And give her absolution upon a bed,
For woe and pain she would soon be dead.
TYB : For God's sake, John John, do thee not displease,
Many a time I am ill at ease.
What thinkest now, am not I somewhat sick ?
JOHN (*aside*) : Now would to God, and sweet Saint Dyryk,
That thou wert in the water up to the throat,
Or in a burning oven red hot,
To see an I would pull thee out.
TYB : Now, John John, to put thee out of doubt.
Imagine thou where that I was.
Before I came home.
JOHN : My percase,
Thou wast praying in the Church of Poules
Upon thy knees for all Christian souls.
TYB : Nay.

JOHN : Then if thou wast not so holy,
Show me where thou wast, and make no lie ?
TYB : Truly, John John, we made a pie,
I and my gossip Margery,
And our gossip the priest, Sir John,
And my neighbour's youngest daughter Anne ;
The priest paid for the stuff and the making,
And Margery she paid for the baking.
JOHN : By Cock's lylly woundis, that same is she,
That is the most bawdy hence to Coventry.
TYB : What say you ?
JOHN : Marry, answer me to this :
Is not Sir John a good man ?
TYB : Yes, that he is.
JOHN : Ha, Tyb ! if I should not grieve thee,
I have somewhat whereof I would meve thee.
TYB : Well, husband ! now I do conject
That thou hast me somewhat in suspect ;
But, by my soul, I never go to Sir John
But I find him like an holy man,
For either he is saying his devotion,
Or else he is going in procession.
JOHN (*aside*) : Yea, round about the bed doth he go,
You two together, and no mo ;
And for to finish the procession,
He leapeth up and thou liest down.
TYB : What sayst thou ?
JOHN : Marry, I say he doth well,
For so ought a shepherd to do, as I heard tell,
For the salvation of all his fold.
TYB : John John !
JOHN : What is it that thou would ?
TYB : By my soul I love thee too too,
And I shall tell thee, or I further go,
The pie that was made, I have it now here,
And therewith I trust we shall make good cheer.
JOHN : By Cock's body that is very happy.
TYB : But wotest who gave it ?
JOHN : What the devil reck I ?
TYB : By my faith, and I shall say true, then
The Devil take me, and it were not Sir John.
JOHN : O hold thy peace, wife, and swear no more,
But I beshrew both your hearts therefore,
TYB : Yet peradventure, thou hast suspection
Of that was never thought nor done.
JOHN : Tush, wife, let all such matters be,
I love thee well, though thou love not me :
But this pie doth now catch harm,
Let us set it upon the hearth to warm.
TYB : Then let us eat it as fast as we can.
But because Sir John is so honest a man,
I would that he should thereof eat his part.
JOHN : That were reason, I thee ensure.

TYB : Then, since that it is thy pleasure,
I pray thee then go to him right,
And pray him come sup with us to-night.

JOHN (*aside*) : Shall he come hither? by Cock's soul I was a-curst
When that I granted to that word first!
But since I have said it, I dare not say nay,
For then my wife and I should make a fray;
But when he is come, I swear by God's mother,
I would give the devil the tone to carry away the tother.

TYB : What sayst?

JOHN : Marry, he is my curate, I say,
My confessor and my friend alway,
Therefore go thou and seek him by and by,
And till thou come again, I will keep the pie.

TYB : Shall I go for him? nay, I shrew me then!
Go thou, and seek, as fast as thou can,
And tell him it.

JOHN : Shall I do so?
In faith, it is not meet for me to go.

TYB : But thou shalt go tell him, for all that.

JOHN : Then shall I tell him, wotest [thou] what?
That thou desirest him to come make some cheer.

TYB : Nay, that thou desirest him to come sup here.

JOHN : Nay, by the rood, wife, thou shalt have the worship
And the thanks of thy guest, that is thy gossip.

TYB (*aside*) : Full oft I see my husband will me rate,
For this hither coming of our gentle curate.

JOHN : What sayst, Tyb? let me hear that again.

TYB : Marry, I perceive very plain
That thou hast Sir John somewhat in suspect;
But by my soul, as far as I conject,
He is virtuous and full of charity.

JOHN (*aside*) : In faith, all the town knoweth better, that he
Is a whoremonger, a haunter of the stews,
An hypocrite, a knave, that all men refuse;
A lier, a wretch, a maker of strife,
Better than they know that thou art my good wife.

TYB : What is that, that thou hast said?

JOHN : Marry, I would have the table set and laid,
In this place or that, I care not whither.

TYB : Then go to, bring the trestles hither.
Abide a while, let me put off my gown!
But yet I am afraid to lay it down,
For I fear it shall be soon stolen.

JOHN : And yet it may lie safe enough unstolen.

TYB : It may lie well here, and I list,—
But, by Cock's soul, here hath a dog pist;
And if I should lay it on the hearth bare,
It might hap to be burned, or I were ware,
Therefore I pray you (*probably turning to one of the audience*), take ye the pain
To keep my gown till I come again.

But yet he shall not have it, by my fay,
He is so near the door, he might run away ;
But because that ye (*another in the audience*) be trusty and sure
Ye shall keep it, and it be your pleasure ;
And because it is arrayed at the skirt,
While ye do nothing, scrape of the dirt.

JOHN : Lo, now am I ready to go to Sir John,
And bid him come as fast as he can.

TYB : Yea, do so without any tarrying.
But I say, hark ! thou hast forgot one thing ;
Set up the table, and that by and by.
Now go thy ways.

JOHN : I go shortly ;
But see your candlesticks be not out of the way.

TYB : Come again, and lay the table I say :
What ! me thinks, ye have soon done !

JOHN : Now I pray God that his malediction
Light on my wife, and on the bald priest.

TYB : Now go thy ways and hie thee ! seest ?

JOHN : I pray to Christ, if my wish be no sin,
That the priest may break his neck, when he comes in.

TYB : Now come again.

JOHN : What a mischief wilt thou, fool !

TYB : Marry, I say, bring hither yonder stool.

JOHN : Now go to, a little would make me
For to say thus, a vengeance take thee !

TYB : Now go to him, and tell him plain,
That till thou bring him, thou wilt not come again.

JOHN : This pie both burn here as it doth stand.

TYB : Go, wash me these two cups in my hand.

JOHN : I go, with a mischief light on thy face !

TYB : Go, and bid him hie him apace,
And the while I shall all things amend.

JOHN : This pie burneth here at this end.
Understandest thou ?

TYB : Go thy ways, I say.

JOHN : I will go now, as fast as I may.

TYB : How, come once again : I had forgot ;
Look, and there be any ale in the pot.

JOHN : Now a vengeance and a very mischief
Light on the peel'd priest, and on my wife,
On the pot, the ale, and on the table,
The candle, the pie, and all the rabble,
On the trestles, and on the stool ;
It is much ado to please a curst fool.

TYB : Go thy ways now, and tarry no more,
For I am a hungered very sore.

JOHN : Marry, I go.

TYB : But come once again yet ;
Bring hither that bread, lest I forgetit

JOHN : I-wis it were time for to turn
The pie, for I-wis it doth burn.

TYB : Lord ! how my husband now doth pa
And of the pie still doth clatter.

Go now, and bid him come away ;
I have bid thee an hundred times to-day.
JOHN : I will not give a straw, I tell you plain,
If that the pie wax could again.
TYB : What ! art thou not gone yet out of this place ?
I had went thou hadst been come again in the space :
But, by Cock's soul, and I should do the right,
I should break thy knave's head to-night.
JOHN : Nay, then if my wife be set a chiding,
It is time for me to go at her bidding.
There is a proverb, which true now proveth.
He must needs go that the devil driveth.
[*Exit to the house of the priest.*
How master curate, may I come in
At your chamber door, without any sin.
SIR JOHN THE PRIEST : Who is there now that would have me ?
What ! John John ! what news with thee ?
JOHN : Marry, Sir, to tell you shortly,
My wife and I pray you heartily,
And eke desire you with all our might,
That ye would come and sup with us to-night.
SIR J. : Ye must pardon me, in faith I ne can.
JOHN : Yes, I desire you, good Sir John,
Take pain this once ; and, yet at the least,
If ye will do nought at my request,
Yet do somewhat for the love of my wife.
SIR J. : I will not go, for making of strife.
But I shall tell thee what thou shalt do,
Thou shalt tarry and sup with me, or thou go.
JOHN : Will ye not go then ? why so ?
I pray you tell me, is there any disdain,
Or any enmity, between you twain ?
SIR J. : In faith to tell thee, between thee and me,
She is as wise a woman as any may be ;
I know it well ; for I have had the charge
Of her soul, and searched her conscience at large.
I never knew her but honest and wise,
Without any evil, or any vice,
Save on fault, I know in her no more,
And because I rebuke her, now and then, therefore,
She is angry with me, and hath me in hate ;
And yet that that I do, I do it for your wealth.
JOHN : Now God yield it you, good master curate,
And as ye do, so send you your health,
Ywys I am bound to you a pleasure.
SIR J. : Yet thou thinkest amiss, peradventure,
That of her body she should not be a good woman,
But I shall tell thee what I have done, John,
For that matter ; she and I be sometime aloft,
And I do lie upon her, many a time and oft,
To prove her, yet could I never espy
That ever any did worse with her than I.
JOHN : Sir, that is the least care I have of nine,
Thanked be God, and your good doctrine ;

But if it please you, tell me the matter,
And the debate between you and her.

SIR J. : I shall tell thee, but thou must keep secret.

JOHN : As for that, Sir, I shall not let.

SIR J. : I shall tell thee now the matter plain,—
She is angry with me and hath me in disdain
Because that I do her oft entice
To do some penance, after mine advice,
Because she will never leave her wrawlyng,
But alway with thee she is chiding and brawling ;
And therefore I know, she hateth [my] presence.

JOHN : Nay, in good faith, saving you reverence.

SIR J. : I know very well, she hath me in hate.

JOHN : Nay, I dare swear for her, master curate :
(*Aside*) But, was I not a very knave ?
I thought surely, so God me save,
That he had loved my wife, for to deceive me,
And now he quitteth himself ; and here I see
He doth as much as he may, for his life,
To styn[te] the debate between me and my wife.

SIR J. : If ever she did, or though[t] me any ill,
Now I forgive her with m[y] free will ;
Therefore, John John, now get thee home
And thank thy wife, and say I will not come.

JOHN : Yet, let me know, now, good Sir John,
Where ye will go to supper then.

SIR J. : I care not greatly and I tell thee,
On Saturday last, I and two or three
Of my friends made an appointment,
And against this night we did assent
That in a place we would sup together ;
And one of them said, [s]he would bring thither
Ale and bread ; and for my part, I
Said, that I would give them a pie,
And there I gave them money for the making ;
And another said, she would pay for the baking :
And so we purpose to make good cheer
For to drive away care and thought.

JOHN : Then I pray you, Sir, tell me here,
Whither should all this gear be brought ?

SIR J. : By my faith, and I should not lie,
It should be delivered to thy wife, the pie.

JOHN : By God ! it is at my house, standing by the fire.

SIR J. : Who bespake that pie ? I thee require.

JOHN : By my faith, and I shall not lie,
It was my wife, and her gossip Margerie,
And your good masship, called Sir John,
And my neighbour's youngest daughter Anne ;
Your masship paid for the stuff and making,
And Margery she paid for the baking.

SIR J. : If thou wilt have me now, in faith I will go.

JOHN : Yea, marry, I beseech your masship do so,
My wife tarrieth for none but us twain ;
She thinketh long or I come again.

SIR J. : Well now, if she chide me in thy presence,
I will be content, and take [it] in patience.
JOHN : By Cock's soul, and she once chide,
Or frown, or lour, or look aside,
I shall bring you a staff as much as I may heave,
Then beat her and spare not ; I give you good leave
To chastise her for her shrewd varying.
[*They return to* JOHN'S *house.*
TYB : The devil take thee for thy long tarrying !
Here is not a whit of water, by my gown,
To wash our hands that we might sit down ;
Go and hie thee, as fast as a snail,
And with fair water fill me this pail.
JOHN : I thank our Lord of his good grace
That I cannot rest long in a place.
TYB : Go, fetch water, I say, at a word,
For it is time the pie were on the board ;
And go with a vengeance, and say thou art prayed.
SIR J. : Ah ! good gossip ! is that well said ?
TYB : Welcome, mine own sweetheart,
We shall make some cheer or we depart.
JOHN : Cock's soul, look how he approacheth near
Unto my wife ; this abateth my cheer. [*Exit.*
SIR J. : By God, I would ye had heard the trifles.
The toys, the mocks, the fables, and the niffles,
That I made thy husband to believe and think !
Thou mightest as well into the earth sink,
As thou couldst forbear laughing any while.
TYB : I pray thee let me hear part of that wile.
SIR J. : Marry, I shall tell thee as fast as I can.
But peace, no more—yonder cometh thy good man.
[*Re-enter* JOHN.
JOHN : Cock's soul, what have we here ?
As far as I saw, he drew very near
Unto my wife.
TYB : What, art come so soon ?
Give us water to wash now—have done.
[*Then he bringeth the pail empty.*
JOHN : By Cock's soul, it was, even now, full to the brink,
But it was out again or I could think ;
Whereof I marvelled, by God Almight,
And then I looked between me and the light
And I spied a clift, both large and wide.
Lo, wife ! here it is on the tone side.
TYB : Why dost not stop it ?
JOHN : Why, how shall I do it ?
TYB : Take a little wax.
JOHN : How shall I come to it ?
SIR J. : Marry, here be two wax candles, I say,
Which my gossip Margery gave me yesterday.
TYB : Tush, let him alone, for, by the rood,
It is pity to help him, or do him good.
SIR J. : What ! John John, canst thou make no shift ?
Take this wax, and stop therewith the clift.

JOHN : This wax is as hard as any wire.
TYB : Thou must chafe it a little at the fire.
JOHN : She that bought thee these wax candles twain,
She is a good companion certain.
TYB : What, was it not my gossip Margery ?
SIR J. : Yes, she is a blessed woman surely.
TYB : Now would God I were as good as she,
For she is virtuous, and full of charity.
JOHN (*aside*) : Now, so God help me ; and by my holydom,
She is the errantest baud between this and Rome.
TYB : What sayst ?
JOHN : Marry, I chafe the wax,
And I chafe it so hard that my fingers cracks.
But take up this pie that I here turn ;
And it stand long, i-wis it will burn.
TYB : Yea, but thou must chafe the wax, I say.
JOHN : Bid him sit down, I thee pray—
Sit down, good Sir John, I you require.
TYB : Go, I say, and chafe the wax by the fire,
While that we sup, Sir John and I.
JOHN : And how now, what will ye do with the pie ?
Shall I not eat thereof a morsel ?
TYB : Go and chafe the wax while thou art well,
And let us have no more prating thus.
SIR J. : *Benedicite.*
JOHN : *Dominus.*
TYB : Now go chafe the wax, with a mischief.
JOHN : What ! I come to bless the board, sweet wife !
It is my custom now and then.
Much good do it you, Master Sir John.
TYB : Go chafe the wax, and here no longer tarry.
JOHN (*aside*) : And is not this a very purgatory
To see folks eat, and may not eat a bit ?
By Cock's soul, I am a very woodcock.
This pail here, now a vengeance take it !
Now my wife giveth me a proud mock !
TYB : What dost ?
JOHN : Marry, I chafe the wax here,
And I imagine to make you good cheer,
(*Aside.*) That a vengeance take you both as ye sit,
For I know well I shall not eat a bit.
But yet, in faith, if I might eat one morsel,
I would think the matter went very well.
SIR J. : Gossip, John John, now much good do it you.
What cheer make you, there by the fire ?
JOHN : Master parson, I thank you now ;
I fare well enow after mine own desire.
SIR J. : What dost, John John, I thee require ?
JOHN : I chafe the wax here by the fire.
TYB : Here is good drink, and here is a good pie.
SIR J. : We fare very well, thanked be our lady.
TYB : Look how the cuckold chafeth the wax that is hard,
And for his life, dareth not look hitherward.

SIR J. : What doth my gossip ?
JOHN : I chafe the wax—
(*Aside.*) And I chafe it so hard that my fingers cracks ;
And eke the smoke putteth out my eyes two :
I burn my face, and ray my clothes also,
And yet I dare not say one word,
And they sit laughing yonder at the board.
TYB : Now, by my troth, it is a pretty jape,
For a wife to make her husband her ape.
Look of John John, which maketh hard shift
To chafe the wax, to stop therewith the clift.
JOHN (*aside*) : Yea, that a vengeance take ye both two,
Both him and thee, and thee and him also ;
And that ye may choke with the same meat
At the first morsel that ye do eat.
TYB : Of what thing now dost thou clatter,
John John ? or whereof dost thou patter ?
JOHN : I chafe the wax, and make hard shift
To stop herewith of the pail the rift.
SIR J. : So must he do, John John, by my father kin,
That is bound of wedlock in the yoke.
JOHN (*aside*) : Look how the peel'd priest crammeth in ;
That would to God he might therewith choke.
TYB : Now, Master Parson, pleaseth your goodness
To tell us some tale of mirth or sadness,
For our pastime, in way of communication.
SIR J. : I am content to do it for our recreation,
And of three miracles I shall to you say.
JOHN : What, must I chafe the wax all day,
And stand here, roasting by the fire ?
SIR J. : Thou must do somewhat at thy wife's desire !
I know a man which wedded had a wife,
As fair a woman as ever bare life,
And within a sennight after, right soon
He went beyond sea, and left her alone,
And tarried there about a seven year ;
And as he came homeward he had a heavy cheer,
For it was told him that she was in heaven.
But, when that he comen home again was,
He found his wife, and with her children seven,
Which she had had in the mean space ;
Yet had she not had so many by three
If she had not had the help of me.
Is not this a miracle, if ever were any,
That this good wife should have children so many
Here in this town, while her husband should be
Beyond the sea, in a far country.
JOHN : Now, in good sooth, this is a wonderous miracle,
But for your labour, I would that your tackle
Were in a scalding water well sod.
TYB : Peace, I say, thou lettest the word of God.
SIR J. : Another miracle eke I shall you say,
Of a woman, which that many a day

Had been wedded, and in all that season
She had no child, nother daughter nor son ;
Wherefore to Saint Modwin she went on pilgrimage,
And offered there a live pig, as is the usage
Of the wives that in London dwell ;
And through the virtue thereof, truly to tell,
Within a month after, right shortly,
She was delivered of a child as much as I.
How say you, is not this miracle wonderous ?

JOHN : Yes, in good sooth, sir, it is marvellous ;
But surely, after mine opinion,
That child was nother daughter nor son.
For certainly, and I be not beguiled,
She was delivered of a knave child.

TYB : Peace, I say, for God's passion,
Thou lettest Sir John's communication.

SIR J. : The third miracle also is this :
I knew another woman eke y-wys,
Which was wedded, and within five months after
She was delivered of a fair daughter,
As well formed in every member and joint,
And as perfect in every point
As though she had gone five months full to th' end.
Lo ! here is five months of advantage.

JOHN : A wonderous miracle ! so God me mend ;
I would each wife that is bound in marriage,
And that is wedded here within this place,
Might have as quick speed in every such case.

TYB : Forsooth, Sir John, yet for all that
I have seen the day that puss, my cat,
Hath had in a year kittlins eighteen.

JOHN : Yea, Tyb, my wife, and that have I seen.
But how say you, Sir John, was it good, your pie ?
The devil the morsel that thereof eat I.
By the good lord this is a piteous work—
But now I see well the old proverb is true :
That parish priest forgetteth that ever he was clerk !
But, Sir John, doth not remember you
How I was your clerk, and holpe you mass to sing ?
And held the basin alway at the offering ?
He never had half so good a clerk as I !
But, notwithstanding all this, now our pie
Is eaten up, there is not left a bit,
And you two together there do sit,
Eating and drinking at your own desire,
And I am John John, which must stand by the fire
Chafing the wax, and dare none other wise do.

SIR J. : And shall we alway sit here still, we two ?
That were too much.

TYB : Then rise we out of this place.

SIR J. : And kiss me then in the stead of grace ;
And farewell leman and my love so dear.

JOHN : Cock's body, this wax it waxeth cold again here ;—
But what ! shall I anon go to bed,
And eat nothing, nother meat nor bread ?
I have not be wont to have such fare.
TYB : Why ! were ye not served there as ye are,
Chafing the wax, standing by the fire ?
JOHN : Why, what meat gave ye me, I you require ?
SIR J. : Wast thou not served, I pray thee heartily,
Both with the bread, the ale, and the pie ?
JOHN : No, sir, I had none of that fare.
TYB : Why ! were ye not served there as ye are,
Standing by the fire chafing the wax ?
JOHN : Lo, here be many trifles and knacks—
By Cock's soul, they ween I am other drunk or mad.
TYB : And had ye no meat, John John ? no had ?
JOHN : No, Tyb my wife, I had not a whit.
TYB : What, not a morsel ?
JOHN : No, not one bit ;
For hunger, I trow, I shall fall in a sowne.
SIR J. : O, that were pity, I swear by my crown.
TYB : But is it true ?
JOHN : Yea, for a surety.
TYB : Dost thou lie ?
JOHN : No, so mote I thee !
TYB : Hast thou had nothing ?
JOHN : No, not a bit.
TYB : Hast thou not drunk ?
JOHN : No, not a whit.
TYB : Where wast thou ?
JOHN : By the fire I did stand.
TYB : What didst ?
JOHN : I chafed this wax in my hand,
Whereas I knew of wedded men the pain
That they have, and yet dare not complain ;
For the smoke put out my eyes two,
I burned my face, and rayed my clothes also,
Mending the pail, which is so rotten and old,
That it will not skant together hold ;
And sith it is so, and since that ye twain
Would give me no meat for my sufficiance,
By Cock's soul I will take no longer pain,
Ye shall do all yourself, with a very vengeance,
For me, and take thou there thy pail now,
And if thou canst mend it, let me see how.
TYB : A ! whoreson's knave ! hast thou broke my pail ?
Thou shalt repent, by Cock's lylly nail.
Reach me my distaff, or my clipping shears :
I shall make the blood run about his ears.
JOHN : Nay, stand still, drab, I say, and come no near,
For by Cock's blood, if thou come here,
Or if thou once stir toward this place,
I shall throw this shovel full of coals in thy face.
TYB : Yea ! whoreson drivel ! get thee out of my door.
JOHN : Nay ! get thou out of my house, thou priest's whore.

SIR J. : Thou liest, whoreson cuckold, even to thy face.
JOHN : And thou liest, peel'd priest, with an evil grace.
TYB : And thou liest.
JOHN : And thou liest, Sir.
SIR J. : And thou liest again.
JOHN : By Cock's soul, whoreson priest, thou shalt be slain ;
Thou hast eat our pie, and give me nought,
By Cock's blood, it shall be full dearly bought.
TYB : At him, Sir John, or else God give thee sorrow.
JOHN : And have at your whore and thief, Saint George to borrow.

[*Here they fight by the ears a while, and then the priest and the wife go out of the place.*

JOHN : A ! sirs ! I have paid some of them even as I list,
They have borne many a blow with my fist,
I thank God, I have walked them well,
And driven them hence. But yet, can ye tell
Whither they be gone ? for by God, I fear me,
That they be gone together, he and she,
Unto his chamber, and perhaps she will,
Spite of my heart, tarry there still,
And, peradventure, there, he and she
Will make me cuckold, even to anger me ;
And then had I a pig in the worse panyer,
Therefore, by God, I will hie me thither
To see if they do me any villainy :
And thus fare well this noble company.

1585–87

THE SPANISH TRAGEDY

(By THOMAS KYD)

The earlier English plays are what we should call one-acters. With the decline of the Morality and the development of secular drama, classical influences, particularly Latin, inspired experiments in the "full-length play"—comedies after Plautus and Terence, tragedies after Seneca. There was a period of pedantic concentration, and many monstrosities were produced in the name of Aristotle. A vital popular taste gradually shaped a more spontaneous output. Plays becoming more and more the rage, the theatre came into being. And with the theatre—the popular success. *The Spanish Tragedy* enjoyed a vogue of fifty years—*the* fifty years of the English drama—extending, through German and Dutch adaptations, to many parts of the Continent. It is manifestly "good theatre."

Its author, Thomas Kyd (1558–1594), the son of a London scrivener, was educated at Merchant Taylor's School. He belonged to the group of so-called University wits, with whom Shakespeare, a greenhorn from the country, was no doubt proud to rub shoulders. These young men did the spade-work for the later and greater dramatists. Kyd, with Marlowe, showed what wonders

uld be performed with blank verse. Success and fame did not bring happiness. nplicated with Marlowe on a charge of atheism, he suffered imprisonment d died, socially an "outsider," at the age of thirty-six.

One other of his known plays is of particular interest to the modern reader, d of that unfortunately, only the name remains to us. The name is *Hamlet.*

THE SPANISH TRAGEDY

Characters

HOST OF ANDREA, *a Spanish nobleman,* VENGE, } *Chorus*
NG OF SPAIN
PRIAN DUKE OF CASTILE, *his brother*
RENZO, *the Duke's son*
LLIMPERIA, *Lorenzo's sister*
CEROY OF PORTUGAL
LTHAZAR, *his son*
ON PEDRO, *the Viceroy's brother*
ERONIMO, *Marshal of Spain*
ABELLA, *his wife*
RATIO, *their son*
ANISH GENERAL
PUTY
ON BAZULTO, *an old man*
ree CITIZENS

PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR
ALEXANDRO, VILLUPPO, } *Portuguese noblemen*
Two PORTUGUESE
PEDRINGANO, *Bellimperia's servant*
CHRISTOPHIL, *Bellimperia's custodian*
LORENZO'S PAGE
SERBERINE, *Balthazar's servant*
ISABELLA'S MAID
MESSENGER
HANGMAN
Three KINGS *and three* KNIGHTS *in the first Dumb-show*
HYMEN *and two* TORCH-BEARERS *in the second*
BAZARDO, *a Painter*
PEDRO and JACQUES, *Hieronimo's servants*

Army. Banquet. Royal suites. Noblemen. Halberdiers. Officers. Three Watchmen. Trumpets. Servants, *etc.*

ACT I

SCENE I—*Induction*

Enter the GHOST OF ANDREA, *and with him* REVENGE.

GHOST : When this eternal substance of my soul
Did live imprison'd in my wanton flesh,
Each in their function serving other's need,
I was a courtier in the Spanish court :
My name was Don Andrea ; my descent,
Though not ignoble, yet inferior far
To gracious fortunes of my tender youth.
For there in prime and pride of all my years,
By duteous service and deserving love,
In secret I possess'd a worthy dame,
Which hight sweet Bellimperia by name.
But, in the harvest of my summer joys,
Death's winter nipp'd the blossoms of my bliss,
Forcing divorce betwixt my love and me.
For in the late conflict with Portingal
My valour drew me into danger's mouth,
Till life to death made passage through my wounds.
When I was slain, my soul descended straight
To pass the flowing stream of Acheron

But churlish Charon, only boatman there,
Said that, my rites of burial not perform'd,
I might not sit amongst his passengers.
Ere Sol had slept three nights in Thetis' lap,
And slak'd his smoking chariot in her flood,
By Don Horatio, our knight marshal's son,
My funerals and obsequies were done.
Then was the ferryman of hell content
To pass me over to the slimy strand,
That leads to fell Avernus' ugly waves.
There, pleasing Cerberus with honey'd speech,
I pass'd the perils of the foremost porch.
Not far from hence, amidst ten thousand souls,
Sat Minos, Aeacus, and Rhadamanth ;
To whom no sooner 'gan I make approach,
To crave a passport for my wand'ring ghost,
But Minos, in graven leaves of lottery,
Drew forth the manner of my life and death.
" This knight," qouth he, " both liv'd and died in love ;
And for his love tried fortune of the wars ;
And by war's fortune lost both love and life."
" Why then," said Aeacus, " convey him hence,
To walk with lovers in our fields of love,
And spend the course of everlasting time
Under green myrtle-trees and cypress shades."
" No, no," said Rhadamanth, " it were not well,
With loving souls to place a martialist :
He died in war, and must to martial fields,
Where wounded Hector lives in lasting pain,
And Achilles' Myrmidons do scour the plain."
Then Minos, mildest censor of the three,
Made this device to end the difference :
" Send him," quoth he, " to our infernal king,
To doom him as best seems his majesty."
To this effect my passport straight was drawn.
In keeping on my way to Pluto's court,
Through dreadful shades of ever-glooming night,
I saw more sights than thousand tongues can tell,
Or pens can write, or mortal hearts can think.
Three ways there were : that on the right-hand side
Was ready way unto the 'foresaid fields,
Where lovers live and bloody martialists ;
But either sort contain'd within his bounds.
The left-hand path, declining fearfully,
Was ready downfall to the deepest hell,
Where bloody Furies shake their whips of steel,
And poor Ixion turns an endless wheel ;
Where usurers are chok'd with melting gold,
And wantons are embrac'd with ugly snakes,
And murd'rers groan with never-killing wounds,
And perjur'd wights scalded in boiling lead,
And all foul sins with torments overwhelm'd.
'Twixt these two ways I trod the middle path,
Which brought me to the fair Elysian green,

In midst whereof there stands a stately tower,
The walls of brass, the gates of adamant :
Here finding Pluto with his Proserpine,
I show'd my passport, humbled on my knee ;
Whereat fair Proserpine began to smile,
And begg'd that only she might give my doom :
Pluto was pleas'd, and seal'd it with a kiss.
Forthwith, Revenge, she rounded thee in th' ear,
And bad thee lead me through the gates of horn,
Where dreams have passage in the silent night.
No sooner had she spoke, but we were here—
I wot not how—in twinkling of an eye.

REVENGE : Then know Andrea, that thou art arriv'd
Where thou shalt see the author of thy death,
Don Balthazar, the prince of Portingal,
Depriv'd of life by Bellimperia.
Here sit we down to see the mystery,
And serve for Chorus in this tragedy.

SCENE II—*The Court of Spain.*

Enter SPANISH KING, GENERAL, CASTILE, *and* HIERONIMO.

KING : Now say, lord General, how fares our camp ?
GEN. : All well, my sovereign liege, except some few
That are deceas'd by fortune of the war.
KING : But what portends thy cheerful countenance,
And posting to our presence thus in haste ?
Speak, man, hath fortune given us victory ?
GEN. : Victory, my liege, and that with little loss.
KING : Our Portingals will pay us tribute then ?
GEN. : Tribute and wonted homage therewithal.
KING : Then bless'd be heaven and guider of the heavens,
From whose fair influence such justice flows.
CAST. : *O multum dilecte Deo, tibi militat aether,*
Et conjuratae curvato poplite gentes
Succumbunt ; recti soror est victoria juris.
KING : Thanks to my loving brother of Castile.
But, General, unfold in brief discourse
Your form of battle and your war's success,
That, adding all the pleasure of thy news
Unto the height of former happiness,
With deeper wage and greater dignity
We may reward thy blissful chivalry.
GEN. : Where Spain and Portingal do jointly knit
Their frontiers, leaning on each other's bound,
There met our armies in their proud array :
Both furnish'd well, both full of hope and fear,
Both menacing alike with daring shows,
Both vaunting sundry colours of device,
Both cheerly sounding trumpets, drums, and fifes,
Both raising dreadful clamours to the sky,
That valleys, hills, and rivers made rebound,
And heav'n itself was frighted with the sound.

Our battles both were pitch'd in squadron form,
Each corner strongly fenc'd with wings of shot ;
But ere we join'd and came to push of pike,
I brought a squadron of our readiest shot
From out our rearward, to begin the fight :
They brought another wing t' encounter us.
Meanwhile, our ordnance play'd on either side,
And captains strove to have their valours tried.
Don Pedro, their chief horsemen's colonel,
Did with his cornet bravely make attempt
To break the order of our battle ranks :
But Don Rogero, worthy man of war,
March'd forth against him with our musketeers,
And stopp'd the malice of his fell approach.
While they maintain hot skirmish to and fro,
Both battles join, and fall to handy-blows,
Their violent shot resembling th' ocean's rage,
When, roaring loud, and with a swelling tide,
It beats upon the rampiers of huge rocks,
And gapes to swallow neighbour-bounding lands.
Now while Bellona rageth here and there,
Thick storms of bullets ran like winter's hail,
And shiver'd lances dark the troubled air.
Pede pes et cuspide cuspis ;
Arma sonant armis, vir petiturque viro.
On every side drop captains to the ground,
And soldiers, some ill-maim'd, some slain outright :
Here falls a body sunder'd from his head,
There legs and arms lie bleeding on the grass,
Mingled with weapons and unbowell'd steeds,
That scatt'ring overspread the purple plain.
In all this turmoil, three long hours and more,
The victory to neither part inclin'd ;
Till Don Andrea, with his brave lanciers,
In their main battle made so great a breach,
That, half dismay'd, the multitude retir'd :
But Balthazar, the Portingals' young prince,
Brought rescue, and encourag'd them to stay.
Here-hence the fight was eagerly renew'd,
And in that conflict was Andrea slain :
Brave man at arms, but weak to Balthazar.
Yet while the prince, insulting over him,
Breath'd out proud vaunts, sounding to our reproach,
Friendship and hardy valour, join'd in one,
Prick'd forth Horatio, our Knight marshal's son,
To challenge forth that prince in single fight.
Not long between these twain the fight endur'd,
But straight the prince was beaten from his horse,
And forc'd to yield him prisoner to his foe.
When he was taken, all the rest they fled,
And our carbines pursu'd them to the death,
Till, Phœbus waving to the western deep,
Our trumpeters were charg'd to sound retreat.

KING : Thanks, good lord General, for these good news ;

And for some argument of more to come,
Take this and wear it for thy sovereign's sake.
[*Gives him his chain.*
But tell me now, hast thou confirm'd a peace?

GEN. : No peace, my liege, but peace conditional,
That if with homage tribute be well paid,
The fury of your forces will be stay'd :
And to this peace their viceroy hath subscrib'd,
[*Gives the* KING *a paper.*
And made a solemn vow that, during life,
His tribute shall be truly paid to Spain.

KING : These words, these deeds, become thy person well.
But now, knight marshal, frolic with thy king,
For 'tis thy son that wins this battle's prize.

HIER. : Long may he live to serve my sovereign liege,
And soon decay, unless he serve my liege.

KING : Nor thou, nor he, shall die without reward.
[*A tucket afar off.*
What means the warning of this trumpet's sound?

GEN. : This tells me that your grace's men of war,
Such as war's fortune hath reserv'd from death,
Come marching on towards your royal seat,
To show themselves before your majesty :
For so I gave in charge at my depart.
Whereby by demonstration shall appear,
That all, except three hundred or few more,
Are safe returned, and by their foes enrich'd.

The Army enters ; BALTHAZAR, *between* LORENZO *and* HORATIO, *captive.*

KING : A gladsome sight ! I long to see them here.
[*They enter and pass by.*
Was that the warlike prince of Portingal,
That by our nephew was in triumph led?

GEN. : It was, my liege, the prince of Portingal.

KING : But what was he that on the other side.
Held him by th' arm, as partner of the prize?

HIER. : That was my son, my gracious sovereign ;
Of whom though from his tender infancy
My loving thoughts did never hope but well,
He never pleas'd his father's eyes till now,
Nor fill'd my heart with over-cloying joys.

KING : Go, let them march once more about these walls,
That, staying them, we may confer and talk
With our brave prisoner and his double guard.
Hieronimo, it greatly pleaseth us
That in our victory thou have a share,
By virtue of thy worthy son's exploit. [*Enters again.*
Bring hither the young prince of Portingal :
The rest march on ; but, ere they be dismiss'd,
We will bestow on every soldier
Two ducats and on every leader ten,
That they may know our largess welcomes them.
[*Exeunt all but* BALTHAZAR, LORENZO, *and* HORATIO.

Welcome, Don Balthazar! welcome, nephew!
And thou, Horatio, thou art welcome too.
Young prince, although thy father's hard misdeeds,
In keeping back the tribute that he owes,
Deserve but evil measure at our hands,
Yet shalt thou know that Spain is honourable.

BAL. : The trespass that my father made in peace
Is now controll'd by fortune of the wars;
And cards once dealt, it boots not ask why so.
His men are slain, a weak'ning to his realm;
His colours seiz'd, a blot unto his name;
His son distress'd, a cor'sive to his heart:
These punishments may clear his late offence.

KING : Ay, Balthazar, if he observe this truce,
Our peace will grow the stronger for these wars.
Meanwhile live thou, though not in liberty,
Yet free from bearing any servile yoke;
For in our hearing thy deserts were great,
And in our sight thyself art gracious.

BAL. : And I shall study to deserve this grace.

KING : But tell me—for their holding makes me doubt—
To which of these twain art thou prisoner?

LOR. : To me, my liege.

HOR. : To me, my sovereign.

LOR. : This hand first took his courser by the reins.

HOR. : But first my lance did put him from his horse.

LOR. : I seiz'd his weapon, and enjoy'd it first.

HOR. : But first I forc'd him lay his weapons down.

KING : Let go his arm, upon our privilege. [*They let him go.*
Say, worthy prince, to whether did'st thou yield?

BAL. : To him in courtesy, to this perforce:
He spake me fair, this other gave me strokes;
He promis'd life, this other threaten'd death;
He won my love, this other conquer'd me,
And, truth to say, I yield myself to both.

HIER. : But that I know your grace for just and wise,
And might seem partial in this difference,
Enforc'd by nature and by law of arms
My tongue should plead for young Horatio's right:
He hunted well that was a lion's death,
Not he that in a garment wore his skin;
So hares may pull dead lions by the beard.

KING : Content thee, marshal, thou shalt have no wrong;
And, for thy sake, thy son shall want no right.
Will both abide the censure of my doom?

LOR. : I crave no better than your grace awards.

HOR. : Nor I, although I sit beside my right.

KING : Then, by my judgment, thus your strife shall end:
You both deserve, and both shall have reward.
Nephew, thou took'st his weapon and his horse:
His weapons and his horse are thy reward.
Horatio, thou did'st force him first to yield:
His ransom therefore is thy valour's fee;
Appoint the sum, as you shall both agree.

But, nephew, thou shalt have the prince in guard,
For thine estate best fitteth such a guest :
Horatio's house were small for all his train,
Yet, in regard thy substance passeth his,
And that just guerdon may befall desert,
To him we yield the armour of the prince.
How likes Don Balthazar of this device ?

BAL. : Right well, my liege, if this proviso were,
That Don Horatio bear us company,
Whom I admire and love for chivalry.

KING : Horatio, leave him not that loves thee so.—
Now let us hence to see our soldiers paid,
And feast our prisoner as our friendly guest. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Court of Portugal.*

Enter VICEROY, ALEXANDRO, VILLUPPO.

VIC. : Is our ambassador despatch'd for Spain ?

ALEX. : Two days, my liege, are past since his depart.

VIC. : And tribute-payment gone along with him ?

ALEX. : Ay, my good lord.

VIC. : Then rest we here awhile in our unrest,
And feed our sorrows with some inward sighs ;
For deepest cares break never into tears.
But wherefore sit I in a regal throne ?
This better fits a wretch's endless moan.
[*Falls to the ground.*
Yet this is higher than my fortunes reach,
And therefore better than my state deserves.
Ay, ay, this earth, image of melancholy,
Seeks him whom fates adjudge to misery.
Here let me lie ; now am I at the lowest.
Qui jacet in terra, non habet unde cadat
In me consumpsit vires fortuna nocendo :
Nil superest ut jam possit obesse magis.
Yes, Fortune may bereave me of my crown :
Here, take it now ;—let Fortune do her worst,
She will not rob me of this sable weed :
O no, she envies none but pleasant things.
Such is the folly of despiteful chance !
Fortune is blind, and sees not my deserts ;
So is she deaf, and hears not my laments ;
And could she hear, yet is she wilful-mad,
And therefore will not pity my distress.
Suppose that she could pity me, what then ?
What help can be expected at her hands
Whose foot is standing on a rolling stone,
And mind more mutable than fickle winds ?
Why wail I then, where's hope of no redress ?
O yes, complaining makes my grief seem less.
My late ambition hath distain'd my faith ;
My breach of faith occasion'd bloody wars ;
Those bloody wars have spent my treasure ;
And with my treasure my people's blood ;

And with their blood, my joy and best belov'd,
My best belov'd, my sweet and only son.
O, wherefore went I not to war myself?
The cause was mine; I might have died for both:
My years were mellow, his but young and green;
My death were natural, but his was fore'd.

ALEX. : No doubt, my liege, but still the prince survives.

VIC. : Survives! ay, where?

ALEX. : In Spain—a prisoner by mischance of war.

VIC. : Then they have slain him for his father's fault.

ALEX. : That were a breach to common law of arms.

VIC. : They reck no laws that meditate revenge.

ALEX. : His ransom's worth will stay from foul revenge.

VIC. : No; if he liv'd, the news would soon be here.

ALEX. : Nay, evil news fly faster still than good.

VIC. : Tell me no more of news; for he is dead.

VIL. : My sovereign, pardon the author of ill news,
And I'll bewray the fortune of thy son.

VIC. : Speak on, I'll guerdon thee, whate'er it be:
Mine ear is ready to receive ill news;
My heart grown hard 'gainst mischief's battery.
Stand up, I say, and tell thy tale at large.

VIL. : Then hear that truth which these mine eyes have seen:
When both the armies were in battle join'd,
Don Balthazar, amidst the thickest troops,
To win renown did wondrous feats of arms:
Amongst the rest I saw him, hand to hand,
In single fight with their lord-general;
Till Alexandro, that here counterfeits,
Under the colour of a duteous friend
Discharg'd his pistol at the prince's back,
As though he would have slain their general:
But therewithal Don Balthazar fell down;
And when he fell, then we began to fly:
But, had he liv'd, the day had sure been ours.

ALEX. : O wicked forgery! O trait'rous miscreant!

VIC. : Hold thou thy peace! But now, Villuppo, say,
Where then became the carcase of my son?

VIL. : I saw them drag it to the Spanish tents.

VIC. : Ay, ay, my nightly dreams have told me this.—
Thou false, unkind, unthankful, trait'rous beast,
Wherein had Balthazar offended thee
That thou shouldst thus betray him to our foes?
Was't Spanish gold that bleared so thine eyes
That thou couldst see no part of our deserts?
Perchance, because thou art Terceira's lord,
Thou hadst some hope to wear this diadem,
If first my son and then myself were slain;
But thy ambitious thought shall break thy neck.
Ay, this was it that made thee spill his blood:
[*Takes the crown and puts it on again.*
But I'll now wear it till thy blood be spilt.

ALEX. : Vouchsafe, dread, sovereign, to hear me speak.

VIC. : Away with him ; his sight is second hell.
Keep him till we determine of his death :
If Balthazar be dead, he shall not live.
Villuppo, follow us for thy reward. [*Exit Viceroy.*
VIL. : Thus have I with an envious, forged tale
Deceiv'd the king, betray'd mine enemy,
And hope for guerdon of my villany. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV

Enter HORATIO *and* BELLIMPERIA.

BEL. : Signior Horatio, this is the place and hour,
Wherein I must entreat thee to relate
The circumstance of Don Andrea's death,
Who, living, was my garland's sweetest flower,
And in his death hath buried my delights.
HOR. : For love of him and service to yourself,
I nill refuse this heavy doleful charge ;
Yet tears and sighs, I fear, will hinder me.
When both our armies were enjoin'd in fight,
Your worthy chevalier amidst the thickest,
For glorious cause still aiming at the fairest,
Was at the last by young Don Balthazar
Encounter'd hand to hand : their fight was long,
Their hearts were great, their clamours menacing,
Their strength alike, their strokes both dangerous.
But wrathful Nemesis, that wicked power,
Envying at Andrea's praise and worth,
Cut short his life, to end his praise and worth.
She, she herself, disguis'd in armour's mask—
As Pallas was before proud Pergamus—
Brought in a fresh supply of halberdiers,
Which paunch'd his horse, and ding'd him to the ground.
Then young Don Balthazar with ruthless rage,
Taking advantage of his foe's distress,
Did finish what his halberdiers begun,
And left not, till Andrea's life was done.
Then, though too late, incens'd with just remorse,
I with my band set forth against the prince,
And brought him prisoner from his halberdiers.
BEL. : Would thou hadst slain him that so slew my love !
But then was Don Andrea's carcase lost ?
HOR. : No, that was it for which I chiefly strove,
Nor stepp'd I back till I recover'd him :
I took him up, and wound him in mine arms ;
And wielding him unto my private tent,
There laid him down, and dew'd him with my tears,
And sigh'd and sorrow'd as became a friend.
But neither friendly sorrow, sighs, nor tears
Could win pale Death from his usurpèd right.
Yet this I did, and less I could not do :
I saw him honour'd with due funeral.
This scarf I pluck'd from off his lifeless arm,
And wear it in remembrance of my friend.

BEL. : I know the scarf : would he had kept it still ;
For had he liv'd, he would have kept it still,
And worn it for his Bellimperia's sake :
For 'twas my favour at his last depart.
But now wear thou it both for him and me ;
For after him thou hast deserv'd it best.
But for thy kindness in his life and death,
Be sure, while Bellimperia's life endures,
She will be Don Horatio's thankful friend.
HOR. : And, madam, Don Horatio will not slack
Humbly to serve fair Bellimperia.
But now, if your good liking stand thereto,
I'll crave your pardon to go seek the prince ;
For so the duke, your father, gave me charge.
BEL. : Ay, go, Horatio, leave me here alone ;
For solitude best fits my cheerless mood. [*Exit* HOR.
Yet what avails to wail Andrea's death,
From whence Horatio proves my second love ?
Had he not lov'd Andrea as he did,
He could not sit in Bellimperia's thoughts.
But how can love find harbour in my breast,
Till I revenge the death of my belov'd ?
Yes, second love shall further my revenge !
I'll love Horatio, my Andrea's friend,
The more to spite the prince that wrought his end,
And where Don Balthazar, that slew my love,
Himself now pleads for favour at my hands,
He shall, in rigour of my just disdain,
Reap long repentance for his murd'rous deed.
For what was 't else but murd'rous cowardice,
So many to oppress one valiant knight,
Without respect of honour in the fight ?
And here he comes that murder'd my delight.

Enter LORENZO *and* BALTHAZAR.

LOR. : Sister, what means this melancholy walk ?
BEL. : That for a while I wish no company.
LOR. : But here the prince is come to visit you.
BEL. : That argues that he lives in liberty.
BAL. : No, madam, but in pleasing servitude.
BEL. : Your prison then, belike, is your conceit.
BAL. : Ay, by conceit my freedom is enthrall'd.
BEL. : Then with conceit enlarge yourself again.
BAL. : What, if conceit have laid my heart to gage ?
BEL. : Pay that you borrow'd, and recover it.
BAL. : I die, if it return from whence it lies.
BEL. : A heartless man, and live ? A miracle !
BAL. : Ay, lady, love can work such miracles.
LOR. : Tush, tush, my lord ! let go these ambages,
And in plain terms acquaint her with your love.
BEL. : What boots complaint, when there's no remedy ?
BAL. : Yes, to your gracious self must I complain,
In whose fair answer lies my remedy ;
On whose perfection all my thoughts attend ;

On whose aspect mine eyes find beauty's bower ;
In whose translucent breast my heart is lodg'd.
BEL. : Alas, my lord, these are but words of course,
And but device to drive me from this place.

[*She, in going in, let's fall her glove, which* HORATIO, *coming out, takes up.*

HOR. : Madam, your glove.
BEL. : Thanks, good Horatio ; take it for thy pains.
BAL. : Signior Horatio stoop'd in happy time !
HOR. : I reap'd more grace than I deserv'd or hop'd.
LOR. : My lord, be not dismay'd for what is past :
You know that women oft are humorous ;
These clouds will overblow with little wind :
Let me alone, I'll scatter them myself.
Meanwhile, let us devise to spend the time
In some delightful sports and revelling.
HOR. : The king, my lords, is coming hither straight,
To feast the Portingal ambassador ;
Things were in readiness before I came.
BAL. : Then here it fits us to attend the king,
To welcome hither our ambassador,
And learn my father and my country's health.

SCENE V

Enter the Banquet, Trumpets, the KING, *and* AMBASSADOR.

KING : See, lord Ambassador, how Spain entreats
Their prisoner Balthazar, thy viceroy's son :
We pleasure more in kindness than in wars.
AMB. : Sad is our king, and Portingal laments,
Supposing that Don Balthazar is slain.
BAL. : So am I !—slain by beauty's tyranny.
You see, my lord, how Balthazar is slain :
I frolic with the Duke of Castile's son,
Wrapp'd every hour in pleasures of the court,
And grac'd with favours of his majesty.
KING. : Put off your greetings, till our feast be done ;
Now come and sit with us, and taste our cheer.

[*Sit to the banquet.*

Sit down, young prince, you are our second guest ;
Brother, sit down ; and, nephew, take your place.
Signior Horatio, wait thou upon our cup ;
For well thou hast deservèd to be honour'd.
Now, lordings, fall to ; Spain is Portugal,
And Portugal is Spain : we both are friends ;
Tribute is paid, and we enjoy our right.
But where is old Hieronimo, our marshal ?
He promis'd us, in honour of our guest,
To grace our banquet with some pompous jest.

[*Enter* HIERONIMO *with a drum, three knights, each his scutcheon ; then he fetches three kings, they take their crowns and them captive.*

Hieronimo, this masque contents mine eye,
Although I sound not well the mystery.

HIER. : The first arm'd knight, that hung his scutcheon up,
[*He takes the scutcheon and gives it to the* KING.
Was English Robert, Earl of Gloucester,
Who, when King Stephen bore sway in Albion,
Arriv'd with five and twenty thousand men
In Portingal, and by success of war
Enforc'd the king, then but a Saracen,
To bear the yoke of the English monarchy.
KING : My lord of Portingal, by this you see
That which may comfort both your king and you,
And make your late discomfort seem the less.
But say, Hieronimo, what was the next ?
HIER. : The second knight, that hung his scutcheon up,
[*He doth as he did before.*
Was Edmond, Earl of Kent in Albion,
When English Richard wore the diadem.
He came likewise, and razèd Lisbon walls,
And took the King of Portingal in fight ;
For which and other such-like service done
He after was created Duke of York.
KING : This is another special argument,
That Portingal may deign to bear our yoke,
When it by little England hath been yok'd.
But now, Hieronimo, what were the last ?
HIER. : The third and last, not least, in our account,
[*Doing as before.*
Was, as the rest, a valiant Englishman,
Brave John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster,
As by his scutcheon plainly may appear.
He with a puissant army came to Spain,
And took our King of Castile prisoner.
AMB. : This is an argument for our viceroy
That Spain may not insult for her success,
Since English warriors likewise conquer'd Spain,
And made them bow their knees to Albion.
KING : Hieronimo, I drink to thee for this device,
Which hath pleas'd both the ambassador and me :
Pledge me, Hieronimo, if thou love thy king.
[*Takes the cup of* HORATIO.
My lord, I fear we sit but over-long,
Unless our dainties were more delicate ;
But welcome are you to the best we have.
Now let us in, that you may be despatch'd :
I think our council is already set. [*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE VI

GHOST OF ANDREA, REVENGE.

ANDREA : Come we for this from depth of underground,
To see him feast that gave me my death's wound ?
These pleasant sights are sorrow to my soul :
Nothing but league, and love, and banqueting ?

REVENGE : Be still, Andrea ; ere we go from hence,
I'll turn their friendship into fell despite,
Their love to mortal hate, their day to night,
Their hope into despair, their peace to war,
Their joys to pain, their bliss to misery.

ACT II

SCENE I

Enter LORENZO *and* BALTHAZAR.

LOR. : My lord, though Bellimperia seem thus coy,
Let reason hold you in your wonted joy :
In time the savage bull sustains the yoke,
In time all haggard hawks will stoop to lure,
In time small wedges cleave the hardest oak,
In time the flint is pierc'd with softest shower,
And she in time will fall from her disdain,
And rue the suff'rance of your friendly pain.
BAL. : No, she is wilder, and more hard withal,
Than beast, or bird, or tree, or stony wall.
But wherefore blot I Bellimperia's name ?
It is my fault, not she, that merits blame.
My feature is not to content her sight,
My words are rude, and work her no delight.
The lines I send her are but harsh and ill,
Such as do drop from Pan and Marsyas' quill.
My presents are not of sufficient cost,
And being worthless, all my labour's lost.
Yet might she love me for my valiancy :
Ay, but that's slander'd by captivity.
Yet might she love me to content her sire :
Ay, but her reason masters his desire.
Yet might she love me as her brother's friend :
Ay, but her hopes aim at some other end.
Yet might she love me to uprear her state :
Ay, but perhaps she hopes some nobler mate.
Yet might she love me as her beauty's thrall :
Ay, but I fear she cannot love at all.
LOR. : My lord, for my sake leave this ecstasy,
And doubt not but we'll find some remedy.
Some cause there is that lets you not be lov'd ;
First that must needs be known, and then remov'd.
What, if my sister love some other knight ?
BAL. : My summer's day will turn to winter's night.
LOR. : I have already found a stratagem,
To sound the bottom of this doubtful theme.
My lord, for once you shall be rul'd by me ;
Hinder me not, whate'er you hear or see.
By force or fair means will I cast about
To find the truth of all this question out.
Ho, Pedringano !
PED. : *Signior !*
LOR. : *Vien qui presto.*

Enter PEDRINGANO.

PED. : Hath your lordship any service to command me?

LOR. : Ay, Pedringano, service of import;
And—not to spend the time in trifling words—
Thus stands the case : It is not long, thou know'st,
Since I did shield thee from my father's wrath,
For thy conveyance in Andrea's love,
For which thou wert adjudg'd to punishment :
I stood betwixt thee and thy punishment,
And since, thou know'st how I have favour'd thee.
Now to these favours will I add reward,
Not with fair words, but store of golden coin,
And lands and living join'd with dignities,
If thou but satisfy my just demand :
Tell truth, and have me for thy lasting friend.

PED. : Whate'er it be your lordship shall demand,
My bounden duty bids me tell the truth,
If case it lie in me to tell the truth.

LOR. : Then, Pedringano, this is my demand :
Whom loves my sister Bellimperia?
For she reposeth all her trust in thee.
Speak, man, and gain both friendship and reward :
I mean, whom loves she in Andrea's place?

PED. : Alas, my lord, since Don Andrea's death
I have no credit with her as before ;
And therefore know not, if she love or no.

LOR. : Nay, if thou dally, then I am thy foe,
[*Draws his sword.*
And fear shall force what friendship cannot win :
Thy death shall bury what thy life conceals ;
Thou diest for more esteeming her than me.

PED. : O, stay, my lord.

LOR. : Yet speak the truth, and I will guerdon thee,
And shield thee from whatever can ensue,
And will conceal whate'er proceeds from thee.
But if thou dally once again, thou diest.

PED. : If madam Bellimperia be in love——

LOR. : What, villain ! ifs and ands?

PED. : O, stay, my lord, she loves Horatio.
[BALTHAZAR *starts back.*

LOR. : What, Don Horatio, our knight marshal's son?

PED. : Even him, my lord.

LOR. : Now say, but how know'st thou he is her love?
And thou shalt find me kind and liberal :
Stand up, I say, and fearless tell the truth.

PED. : She sent him letters, which myself perus'd,
Full-fraught with lines and arguments of love,
Preferring him before Prince Balthazar.

LOR. : Swear on this cross that what thou say'st is true ;
And that thou wilt conceal what thou hast told.

PED. : I swear to both, by him that made us all.

LOR. : In hope thine oath is true, here's thy reward :
But if I prove thee perjur'd and unjust,

This very sword, whereon thou took'st thine oath,
Shall be the worker of thy tragedy.
PED. : What I have said is true, and shall—for me—
Be still conceal'd from Bellimperia.
Besides, your honour's liberality
Deserves my duteous service, ev'n till death.
LOR. : Let this be all that thou shalt do for me :
Be watchful, when and where these lovers meet,
And give me notice in some secret sort.
PED. : I will, my lord.
LOR. : Then shalt thou find that I am liberal.
Thou know'st that I can more advance thy state
Than she ; be therefore wise, and fail me not.
Go and attend her, as thy custom is,
Lest absence make her think thou dost amiss.
[*Exit* PEDRINGANO
Why so : *tam armis quam ingenio :*
Where words prevail not, violence prevails ;
But gold doth more than either of them both.
How likes Prince Balthazar this stratagem ?
BAL. : Both well and ill ; it makes me glad and sad :
Glad, that I know the hind'rer of my love ;
Sad, that I fear she hates me whom I love.
Glad, that I know on whom to be reveng'd ;
Sad, that she'll fly me, if I take revenge.
Yet must I take revenge, or die myself,
For love resisted grows impatient.
I think Horatio be my destin'd plague :
First, in his hand he brandishèd a sword,
And with that sword he fiercely wagèd war,
And in that war he gave me dang'rous wounds,
And by those wounds he forcèd me to yield,
And by my yielding I became his slave.
Now in his mouth he carries pleasing words,
Which pleasing words do harbour sweet conceits,
Which sweet conceits are lim'd with sly deceits,
Which sly deceits smooth Bellimperia's ears,
And through her ears dive down into her heart,
And in her heart set him, where I should stand.
Thus hath he ta'en my body by his force,
And now by sleight would captivate my soul :
But in his fall I'll tempt the destinies,
And either lose my life, or win my love.
LOR. : Let's go, my lord ; your staying stays revenge.
Do you but follow me, and gain your love :
Her favour must be won by his remove. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter HORATIO *and* BELLIMPERIA.

HOR. : Now, madam, since by favour of your love
Our hidden smoke is turn'd to open flame,
And that with looks and words we feed our thought
(Two chief contents, where more cannot be had) :

Thus, in the midst of love's fair blandishments,
Why show you sign of inward languishments?

[PEDRINGANO *showeth all to the* PRINCE *and* LORENZO, *placing them in secret.*

BEL. : My heart, sweet friend, is like a ship at sea :
She wisheth port, where, riding all at ease,
She may repair what stormy times have worn,
And leaning on the shore, may sing with joy,
That pleasure follows pain, and bliss annoy.
Possession of thy love is th' only port,
Wherein my heart, with fears and hopes long toss'd,
Each hour doth wish and long to make resort,
There to repair the joys that it hath lost,
And, sitting safe, to sing in Cupid's quire
That sweetest bliss is crown of love's desire.

[BALTHAZAR *and* LORENZO *above.*

BAL. : O sleep, mine eyes, see not my love profan'd ;
Be deaf, my ears, hear not my discontent ;
Die, heart : another joys what thou deserv'st.
LOR. : Watch still, mine eyes, to see this love disjoin'd ;
Hear still, mine ears, to hear them both lament ;
Live, heart, to joy at fond Horatio's fall.
BEL. : Why stands Horatio speechless all this while?
HOR. : The less I speak, the more I meditate.
BEL. : But whereon dost thou chiefly meditate?
HOR. : On dangers past, and pleasures to ensue.
BAL. : On pleasures past, and dangers to ensue.
BEL. : What dangers and what pleasures dost thou mean?
HOR. : Dangers of war, and pleasures of our love.
LOR. : Dangers of death, but pleasures none at all.
BEL. : Let dangers go, thy war shall be with me :
But such a war, as breaks no bond of peace.
Speak thou fair words, I'll cross them with fair words ;
Send thou sweet looks, I'll meet them with sweet looks ;
Write loving lines, I'll answer loving lines ;
Give me a kiss, I'll countercheck thy kiss :
Be this our warring peace, or peaceful war.
HOR. : But, gracious madam, then appoint the field,
Where trial of this war shall first be made.
BAL. : Ambitious villain, how his boldness grows !
BEL. : Then be thy father's pleasant bow'r the field,
Where first we vow'd a mutual amity ;
The court were dangerous, that place is safe.
Our hour shall be, when Vesper 'gins to rise,
That summons home distressful travellers :
There none shall hear us but the harmless birds ;
Haply the gentle nightingale
Shall çarol us asleep, ere we be ware,
And, singing with the prickle at her breast,
Tell our delight and mirthful dalliance :
Till then each hour will seem a year and more.
HOR. : But, honey sweet and honourable love,
Return we now into your father's sight :
Dang'rous suspicion waits on our delight.

LOR. : Ay, danger mixed with jealous despite
Shall send thy soul into eternal night. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Enter KING OF SPAIN, PORTUGAL AMBASSADOR, DON CYPRIAN, *etc.*

KING : Brother of Castile, to the prince's love
What says your daughter Bellimperia ?
CYP. : Although she coy it, as becomes her kind,
And yet dissemble that she loves the prince,
I doubt not, I, but she will stoop in time.
And were she froward, which she will not be,
Yet herein shall she follow my advice,
Which is to love him, or forgo my love.
KING : Then, lord Ambassador of Portingal,
Advise thy king to make this marriage up,
For strength'ning of our late-confirmèd league ;
I know no better means to make us friends.
Her dowry shall be large and liberal :
Besides that she is daughter and half-heir
Unto our brother here, Don Cyprian,
And shall enjoy the moiety of his land,
I'll grace her marriage with an uncle's gift,
And this it is—in case the match go forward— :
The tribute which you pay, shall be releas'd ;
And if by Balthazar she have a son,
He shall enjoy the kingdom after us.
AMB. : I'll make the motion to my sovereign liege,
And work it, if my counsel may prevail.
KING : Do so, my lord, and if he give consent,
I hope his presence here will honour us,
In celebration of the nuptial day ;
And let himself determine of the time.
AMB. : Will't please your grace command me ought beside ?
KING : Commend me to the king, and so farewell.
But where's Prince Balthazar to take his leave ?
AMB. : That is perform'd already, my good lord.
KING : Amongst the rest of what you have in charge,
The prince's ransom must not be forgot :
That's none of mine, but his that took him prisoner ;
And well his forwardness deserves reward :
It was Horatio, our knight marshal's son.
AMB. : Between us there's a price already pitch'd,
And shall be sent with all convenient speed.
KING : Then once again farewell, my lord.
AMB. : Farewell, my lord of Castile, and the rest. [*Exit.*
KING : Now, brother, you must take some little pains
To win fair Bellimperia from her will :
Young virgins must be rulèd by their friends.
The prince is amiable, and loves her well ;
If she neglect him and forgo his love,
She both will wrong her own estate and ours.
Therefore, whiles I do entertain the prince
With greatest pleasure that our court affords,

Endeavour you to win your daughter's thought :
If she give back, all this will come to naught. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

Enter HORATIO, BELLIMPERIA, *and* PEDRINGANO.

HOR. : Now that the night begins with sable wings
To overcloud the brightness of the sun,
And that in darkness pleasures may be done :
Come, Bellimperia, let us to the bow'r,
And there in safety pass a pleasant hour.
BEL. : I follow thee, my love, and will not back,
Although my fainting heart controls my soul.
HOR. : Why, make you doubt of Pedringano's faith ?
BEL. : No, he is as trusty as my second self.—
Go, Pedringano, watch without the gate,
And let us know if any make approach.
PED. (*aside*) : Instead of watching, I'll deserve more gold
By fetching Don Lorenzo to this match. [*Exit* PEDRINGANO.
HOR. : What means my love ?
BEL. : I know not what myself ;
And yet my heart foretells me some mischance.
HOR. : Sweet, say not so ; fair fortune is our friend,
And heav'ns have shut up day to pleasure us.
The stars, thou see'st, hold back their twinkling shine,
And Luna hides herself to pleasure us.
BEL. : Thou hast prevail'd ; I'll conquer my misdoubt,
And in thy love and counsel drown my fear.
I fear no more ; love now is all my thoughts.
Why sit we not ? for pleasure asketh ease.
HOR. : The more thou sitt'st within these leafy bowers,
The more will Flora deck it with her flowers.
BEL. : Ay, but if Flora spy Horatio here,
Her jealous eye will think I sit too near.
HOR. : Hark, madam, how the birds record by night,
For joy that Bellimperia sits in sight.
BEL. : No, Cupid counterfeits the nightingale,
To frame sweet music to Horatio's tale.
HOR. : If Cupid sing, then Venus is not far :
Ay, thou art Venus, or some fairer star.
BEL. : If I be Venus, thou must needs be Mars,
And where Mars reigneth, there must needs be wars.
HOR. : Then thus begin our wars : put forth thy hand,
That it may combat with my ruder hand.
BEL. : Set forth thy foot to try the push of mine.
HOR. : But first my looks shall combat against thine.
BEL. : Then ward thyself : I dart this kiss at thee.
HOR. : Thus I retort the dart thou threw'st at me.
BEL. : Nay, then to gain the glory of the field,
My twining arms shall yoke and make thee yield.
HOR. : Nay, then my arms are large and strong withal :
Thus elms by vines are compass'd, till they fall.
BEL. : O, let me go ; for in my troubled eyes
Now may'st thou read that life in passion dies.

HOR. : O, stay a while, and I will die with thee ;
So shalt thou yield, and yet have conquer'd me.
BEL. : Who's there ? Pedringano ! we are betray'd !

Enter LORENZO, BALTHAZAR, SERBERINE, PEDRINGANO, *disguised.*

LOR. : My lord, away with her, take her aside.—
O, sir, forbear : your valour is already tried.
Quickly despatch, my masters.
[*They hang him in the arbour.*
HOR. : What, will you murder me ?
LOR. : Ay, thus, and thus : these are the fruits of love.
[*They stab him.*
BEL. : O, save his life, and let me die for him !
O, save him, brother ; save him, Balthazar :
I lov'd Horatio ; but he lov'd not me.
BAL. : But Balthazar loves Bellimperia.
LOR. : Although his life were still ambitious-proud,
Yet is he at the highest now he is dead.
BEL. : Murder ! murder ! Help, Hieronimo, help !
LOR. : Come, stop her mouth ; away with her. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V

Enter HIERONIMO *in his shirt, etc.*

HIER. : What outcries pluck me from my naked bed,
And chill my throbbing heart with trembling fear,
Which never danger yet could daunt before ?
Who calls Hieronimo ? speak, here I am.
I did not slumber ; therefore 'twas no dream.
No, no, it was some woman cried for help ;
And here within this garden did she cry ;
And in this garden must I rescue her.—
But stay, what murd'rous spectacle is this ?
A man hang'd up and all the murd'rers gone !
And in my bower, to lay the guilt on me !
This place was made for pleasure, not for death.
[*He cuts him down.*
Those garments that he wears I oft have seen— :
Alas, it is Horatio, my sweet son !
O no, but he that whilom was my son !
O, was it thou that call'dst me from my bed ?
O speak, if any spark of life remain :
I am thy father ; who hath slain my son ?
What savage monster, not of human kind,
Hath here been glutted with thy harmless blood,
And left thy bloody corpse dishonour'd here,
For me, amidst these dark and deathful shades,
To drown thee with an ocean of my tears ?
O heav'ns, why made you night to cover sin ?
By day this deed of darkness had not been.
O earth, why didst thou not in time devour
The vild profaner of this sacred bow'r ?
O poor Horatio, what hadst thou misdone,
To leese thy life, ere life was new begun ?

O wicked butcher, whatsoe'er thou wert,
How could thou strangle virtue and desert?
Ay me most wretched, that have lost my joy,
In leesing my Horatio, my sweet boy!

Enter ISABELLA.

ISAB. : My husband's absence makes my heart to throb :—
Hieronimo!
HIER. : Here, Isabella, help me to lament;
For sighs are stopp'd, and all my tears are spent.
ISAB. : What world of grief! my son Horatio!
O, where's the author of this endless woe?
HIER. : To know the author were some ease of grief;
For in revenge my heart would find relief.
ISAB. : Then is he gone? and is my son gone too?
O, gush out, tears, fountains and floods of tears;
Blow, sighs, and raise an everlasting storm;
For outrage fits our cursèd wretchedness.
[*Ay me, Hieronimo, sweet husband, speak!*
HIER. : *He supp'd with us to-night, frolic and merry,*
And said he would go visit Balthazar
At the duke's palace : there the prince doth lodge,
He had no custom to stay out so late :
He may be in his chamber ; some go see.
Roderigo, ho!

Enter PEDRO *and* JAQUES.

ISAB. : *Ay me, he raves! sweet Hieronimo.*
HIER. : *True, all Spain takes note of it.*
Besides, he is so generally belov'd;
His majesty the other day did grace him
With waiting on his cup : these be favours,
Which do assure me he cannot be short-liv'd.
ISAB. : *Sweet Hieronimo!*
HIER. : *I wonder how this fellow got his clothes!—*
Sirrah, sirrah, I'll know the truth of all :
Jaques, run to the Duke of Castile's presently,
And bid my son Horatio to come home :
I and his mother have had strange dreams to-night,
Do ye hear me, sir?
JAQUES. : *Ay, sir.*
HIER. : *Well, sir, be gone.*
Pedro, come hither ; know'st thou who this is?
PED. : *Too well, sir.*
HIER. : *Too well! who, who is it? Peace, Isabella!*
Nay, blush not, man.
PED. : *It is my lord Horatio.*
HIER. : *Ha, ha, St. James! but this doth make me laugh,*
That there are more deluded than myself.
PED. : *Deluded?*
HIER. : *Ay :*
I would have sworn myself, within this hour,
That this had been my son Horatio :
His garments are so like.
Ha! are they not great persuasions?

ISAB. : *O, would to God it were not so !*
HIER. : *Were not, Isabella ? dost thou dream it is ?*
Can thy soft bosom entertain a thought,
That such a black deed of mischief should be done
On one so pure and spotless as our son ?
Away, I am ashamed.
ISAB. : *Dear Hieronimo,*
Cast a more serious eye upon thy grief :
Weak apprehension gives but weak relief.
HIER. : *It was a man, sure, that was hang'd up here ;*
A youth, as I remember : I cut him down.
If it should prove my son now after all—
Say you ? say you ?—Light ! lend me a taper ;
Let me look again.—O God !
Confusion, mischief, torment, death and hell,
Drop all your stings at once in my cold bosom,
That now is stiff with horror : kill me quickly !
Be gracious to me, thou infective night,
And drop this deed of murder down on me.
Gird in my waste of grief with thy large darkness,
And let me not survive to see the light
May put me in the mind I had a son.
ISAB. : *O sweet Horatio ! O my dearest son !*
HIER. : *How strangely had I lost my way to grief !*]
Sweet, lovely rose, ill-pluck'd before thy time,
Fair, worthy son, not conquer'd, but betray'd,
I'll kiss thee now, for words with tears are stay'd.
ISAB. : And I'll close up the glasses of his sight,
For once these eyes were only my delight.
HIER. : See'st thou this handkercher besmear'd with blood ?
It shall not from me, till I take revenge.
See'st thou those wounds that yet are bleeding fresh ?
I'll not entomb them, till I have revenge.
Then will I joy amidst my discontent ;
Till then my sorrow never shall be spent.
ISAB. : The heav'ns are just ; murder cannot be hid :
Time is the author both of truth and right,
And time will bring this treachery to light.
HIER. : Meanwhile, good Isabella, cease thy plaints,
Or, at the least, dissemble them awhile :
So shall we sooner find the practice out,
And learn by whom all this was brought about.
Come, Isabel, now let us take him up, [*They take him up.*
And bear him in from out this cursèd place.
I'll say his dirge ; singing fits not this case.

O aliquis mihi quas pulchrum ver educat herbas,
[HIERONIMO sets his breast unto his sword.
Misceat, et nostro detur medicina dolori ;
Aut, si qui faciunt annorum oblivia, succos
Praebeat ; ipse metam magnum quaecunque per orbem
Gramina Sol pulchras effert in luminis oras ;
Ipse bibam quicquid meditatur saga veneni,
Quicquid et herbarum vi caeca nenia nectit :

Omnia perpetiar, lethum quoque, dum semel omnis
Noster in extincto moriatur pectore sensus.—
Ergo tuos oculos nunquam, mea vita, videbo,
Et tua perpetuus sepelivit lumina somnus?
Emoriar tecum: sic, sic juvat ire sub umbras.—
Attamen absistam properato cedere letho,
Ne mortem vindicta tuam tam nulla sequatur.

[Here he throws it from him and bears the body away.

SCENE VI

GHOST OF ANDREA, REVENGE.

ANDREA: Brought'st thou me hither to increase my pain?
I look'd that Balthazar should have been slain:
But 'tis my friend Horatio that is slain,
And they abuse fair Bellimperia,
On whom I doted more than all the world,
Because she lov'd me more than all the world.

REVENGE: Thou talk'st of harvest, when the corn is green:
The end is crown of every work well done;
The sickle comes not, till the corn be ripe.
Be still; and ere I lead thee from this place,
I'll show thee Balthazar in heavy case.

ACT III

SCENE I.—*The Court of Portugal*

Enter VICEROY OF PORTINGAL, NOBLES, ALEXANDRO, VILLUPPO.

VIC.: Infortunate condition of kings,
Seated amidst so many helpless doubts!
First we are plac'd upon extremest height,
And oft supplanted with exceeding hate,
But ever subject to the wheel of chance;
And at our highest never joy we so,
As we both doubt and dread our overthrow.
So striveth not the waves with sundry winds,
As fortune toileth in the affairs of kings,
That would be fear'd, yet fear to be belov'd,
Sith fear or love to kings is flattery.
For instance, lordings, look upon your king,
By hate deprivèd of his dearest son,
The only hope of our successive line.

NOB.: I had not thought that Alexandro's heart
Had been envenom'd with such extreme hate;
But now I see that words have several works,
And there's no credit in the countenance.

VIL.: No; for, my lord, had you beheld the train,
That feignèd love had colour'd in his looks,
When he in camp consorted Balthazar,
Far more inconstant had you thought the sun,
That hourly coasts the centre of the earth,
Than Alexandro's purpose to the prince.

VIC.: No more, Villuppo, thou hast said enough,
And with thy words thou slay'st our wounded thoughts.

Nor shall I longer dally with the world,
Procrastinating Alexandro's death :
Go some of you, and fetch the traitor forth,
That, as he is condemnèd, he may die.

Enter ALEXANDRO, *with a* NOBLEMAN *and halberts.*

NOB. : In such extremes will nought but patience serve.
ALEX. : But in extremes what patience shall I use ?
Nor discontents it me to leave the world,
With whom there nothing can prevail but wrong.
NOB. : Yet hope the best.
ALEX. : 'Tis heaven is my hope :
As for the earth, it is too much infect
To yield me hope of any of her mould.
VIC. : Why linger ye ? bring forth that daring fiend,
And let him die for his accursèd deed.
ALEX. : Not that I fear the extremity of death
(For nobles cannot stoop to servile fear)
Do I, O king, thus discontented live.
But this, O this, torments my labouring soul,
That thus I die suspected of a sin,
Whereof, as heav'ns have known my secret thoughts,
So am I free from this suggestion.
VIC. : No more, I say ! to the tortures ! when ?
Bind him, and burn his body in those flames,

[*They bind him to the stake.*

That shall prefigure those unquenchèd fires
Of Phlegethon, preparèd for his soul.
ALEX. : My guiltless death will be aveng'd on thee,
On thee, Villuppo, that hath malic'd thus,
Or for thy meed hast falsely me accus'd.
VIL. : Nay, Alexandro, if thou menace me,
I'll lend a hand to send thee to the lake,
Where those thy words shall perish with thy works :
Injurious traitor ! monstrous homidice !

Enter AMBASSADOR.

AMB. : Stay, hold a while ;
And here—with pardon of his majesty—
Lay hands upon Villuppo.
VIC. : Ambassador,
What news hath urg'd this sudden enterance ?
AMB. : Know, sovereign lord, that Balthazar doth live.
VIC. : What say'st thou ? liveth Balthazar our son ?
AMB. : Your highness' son, Lord Balthazar, doth live ;
And, well entreated in the court of Spain,
Humbly commends him to your majesty.
These eyes beheld—and these my followers— ;
With these, the letters of the king's commends

[*Gives him letters.*

Are happy witnesses of his highness' health.

[*The King looks on the letters, and proceeds.*

VIC. : " Thy son doth live, your tribute is received ;
Thy peace is made, and we are satisfied.
The rest resolve upon as things proposèd
For both our honours and thy benefit."

AMB. : These are his highness' farther articles.
[*He gives him more letters.*

VIC. : Accursèd wretch, to intimate these ills
Against the life and reputation
Of noble Alexandro ! Come, my lord, unbind him :
Let him unbind thee, that is bound to death,
To make a quital for thy discontent. [*They unbind him.*

ALEX. : Dread lord, in kindness you could do no less,
Upon report of such a damnèd fact ;
But thus we see our innocence hath sav'd
The hopeless life which thou, Villuppo, sought
By thy suggestions to have massacred.

VIC. : Say, false Villuppo, wherefore didst thou thus
Falsely betray Lord Alexandro's life ?
Him, whom thou know'st that no unkindness else,
But ev'n the slaughter of our dearest son,
Could once have mov'd us to have misconceiv'd.

ALEX. : Say, treacherous Villuppo, tell the king :
Wherein hath Alexandro us'd thee ill ?

VIL. : Rent with remembrance of so foul a deed,
My guilty soul submits me to thy doom :
For not for Alexandro's injuries,
But for reward and hope to be preferr'd,
Thus have I shamelessly hazarded his life.

VIC. : Which, villain, shall be ransom'd with thy death— :
And not so mean a torment as we here
Devis'd for him who, thou said'st, slew our son,
But with the bitt'rest torments and extremes
That may be yet invented for thine end.
[ALEXANDRO *seems to entreat.*
Entreat me not ! go, take the traitor hence :
[*Exit* VILLUPPO.
And, Alexandro, let us honour thee
With public notice of thy loyalty.—
To end those things articulated here
By out great lord, the mighty King of Spain,
We with our council will deliberate.
Come, Alexandro, keep us company. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter HIERONIMO.

HIER. : O eyes ! no eyes, but fountains fraught with tears ;
O life ! no life, but lively form of death ;
O world ! no world, but mass of public wrongs,
Confus'd and fill'd with murder and misdeeds !
O sacred heav'ns ! if this unhallow'd deed,
If this inhuman and barbarous attempt,
If this incomparable murder thus
Of mine, but now no more my son,
Shall unreveal'd and unrevengèd pass,
How should we term your dealings to be just,
If you unjustly deal with those that in your justice trust ?

The night, sad secretary to my moans,
With direful visions wakes my vexèd soul,
And with the wounds of my distressful son
Solicits me for notice of his death.
The ugly fiends do sally forth of hell,
And frame my steps to unfrequented paths,
And fear my heart with fierce inflamèd thoughts.
The cloudy day my discontents records,
Early begins to register my dreams,
And drive me forth to seek the murtherer.
Eyes, life, world, heav'ns, hell, night, and day,
See, search, shew, send some man, some mean, that may—
[*A letter falleth.*
What's here? a letter? tush! it is not so!—
A letter written to Hieronimo! [*Red ink.*
"For want of ink, receive this bloody writ:
Me hath my hapless brother hid from thee;
Revenge thyself on Balthazar and him:
For these were they that murderèd thy son.
Hieronimo, revenge Horatio's death,
And better fare than Bellimperia doth."
What means this unexpected miracle?
My son slain by Lorenzo and the prince!
What cause had they Horatio to malign?
Or what might move thee, Bellimperia,
To accuse thy brother, had he been the mean?
Hieronimo, beware!—thou art betray'd.
And to entrap thy life this train is laid.
Advise, thee therefore, be not credulous:
This is devisèd to endanger thee,
That thou, by this, Lorenzo shouldst accuse;
And he, for thy dishonour done, should draw
Thy life in question and thy name in hate.
Dear was the life of my belovèd son,
And of his death behoves me be reveng'd:
Then hazard not thine own, Hieronimo,
But live t' effect thy resolution.
I therefore will by circumstances try,
What I can gather to confirm this writ;
And, heark'ning near the Duke of Castile's house,
Close, if I can, with Bellimperia,
To listen more, but nothing to bewray.

Enter PEDRINGANO.

Now, Pedringano!
PED.: Now, Hieronimo!
HIER.: Where's thy lady?
PED.: I know not; here's my lord.

Enter LORENZO.

LOR.: How now, who's this? Hieronimo?
HIER.: My lord——
PED.: He asketh for my lady Bellimperia.
LOR.: What to do, Hieronimo? The duke, my father, hath,
Upon some disgrace, awhile remov'd her hence;

But if it be ought I may inform her of,
Tell me, Hieronimo, and I'll let her know it.

HIER. : Nay, nay, my lord, I thank you ; it shall not need.
I had a suit unto her, but too late,
And her disgrace makes me unfortunate.

LOR. : Why so, Hieronimo ? use me.

HIER. : Oh no, my lord ; I dare not ; it must not be ;
I humbly thank your lordship.

LOR. : Why then, farewell.

HIER. : My grief no heart, my thoughts no tongue can tell.
[*Exit.*

LOR. : Come hither, Pedringano, see'st thou this ?

PED. : My lord, I see it, and suspect it too.

LOR. : This is that damnèd villain Serberine,
That hath, I fear, reveal'd Horatio's death.

PED. : My lord, he could not, 'twas so lately done ;
And since he hath not left my company.

LOR. : Admit he have not, his condition's such,
As fear or flatt'ring words may make him false.
I know his humour, and therewith repent
That e'er I us'd him in this enterprise.
But, Pedringano, to prevent the worst,
And 'cause I know thee secret as my soul,
Here, for thy further satisfaction, take thou this,
[*Gives him more gold.*
And hearken to me—thus it is devis'd :
This night thou must (and, prithee, so resolve)
Meet Serberine at Saint Luigi's Park—
Thou know'st 'tis here hard by behind the house—
There take thy stand, and see thou strike him sure :
For die he must, if we do mean to live.

PED. : But how shall Serberine be there, my lord ?

LOR. : Let me alone ; I'll send to him to meet
The prince and me, where thou must do this deed.

PED. : It shall be done, my lord, it shall be done ;
And I'll go arm myself to meet him there.

LOR. : When things shall alter, as I hope they will,
Then shalt thou mount for this ; thou know'st my mind.
[*Exit Pedringano.*

Che le Ieron !

Enter PAGE.

PAGE : My lord ?

LOR. : Go, sirrah,
To Serberine, and bid him forthwith meet
The prince and me at Saint Luigi's Park,
Behind the house ; this evening, boy !

PAGE : I go, my lord.

LOR. : But, sirrah, let the hour be eight o'clock :
Bid him not fail.

PAGE : I fly, my lord. [*Exit.*

LOR. : Now to confirm the complot thou hast cast
Of all these practices, I'll spread the watch,
Upon precise commandment from the king,

Strongly to guard the place where Pedringano
This night shall murder hapless Serberine.
Thus must we work that will avoid distrust ;
Thus must we practise to prevent mishap,
And thus one ill another must expulse.
This sly enquiry of Hieronimo
For Bellimperia breeds suspicion,
And this suspicion bodes a further ill.
As for myself, I know my secret fault,
And so do they ; but I have dealt for them :
They that for coin their souls endangerèd,
To save my life, for coin shall venture theirs ;
And better it's that base companions die,
Than by their life to hazard our good haps.
Nor shall they live, for me to fear their faith :
I'll trust myself, myself shall be my friend ;
For die they shall, slaves are ordain'd to no other end. [*Exit.*

SCENE III

Enter PEDRINGANO, *with a pistol.*

PED. : Now, Pedringano, bid thy pistol hold,
And hold on, Fortune ! once more favour me ;
Give but success to mine attempting spirit,
And let me shift for taking of mine aim.
Here is the gold : this is the gold propos'd ;
It is no dream that I adventure for,
But Pedringano is possess'd thereof.
And he that would not strain his conscience
For him that thus his liberal purse hath stretch'd,
Unworthy such a favour, may be fail,
And, wishing, want, when such as I prevail.
As for the fear of apprehension,
I know, if need should be, my noble lord
Will stand between me and ensuing harms ;
Besides, this place is free from all suspect :
Here therefore will I stay and take my stand.

Enter the WATCH.

1. I wonder much to what intent it is
That we are thus expressly charg'd to watch.
2. 'Tis by commandment in the king's own name.
3. But we were never wont to watch and ward
So near the duke, his brother's, house before.
2. Content yourself, stand close, there's somewhat in't.

Enter SERBERINE.

SER. : Here, Serberine, attend and stay thy pace ;
For here did Don Lorenzo's page appoint
That thou by his command shouldst meet with him.
How fit a place—if one were so dispos'd—
Methinks this corner is to close with one.
PED. : Here comes the bird that I must seize upon :
Now, Pedringano, or never, play the man !

SER. : I wonder that his lordship stays so long,
Or wherefore should he send for me so late?
PED. : For this, Serberine!—and thou shalt ha't. [*Shoots the dag.*
So, there he lies; my promise is perform'd.

The WATCH.

1. Hark, gentlemen, this is a pistol shot.
2. And here's one slain; —stay the murderer.
PED. : Now by the sorrows of the souls in hell,
[*He strives with the* WATCH.
Who first lays hand on me, I'll be his priest.
3. Sirrah, confess, and therein play the priest
Why hast thou thus unkindly kill'd the man?
PED. : Why? because he walk'd abroad so late.
3. Come, sir, you had been better kept your bed,
Than have committed this misdeed so late.
2. Come, to the marshal's with the murderer!
1. On to Hieronimo's! help me here
To bring the murder'd body with us too.
PED. : Hieronimo? carry me before whom you will:
Whate'er he be, I'll answer him and you;
And do your worst, for I defy you all. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

Enter LORENZO *and* BALTHAZAR.

BAL. : How now, my lord, what makes you rise so soon?
LOR. : Fear of preventing our mishaps too late.
BAL. : What mischief is it that we not mistrust?
LOR. : Our greatest ills we least mistrust, my lord,
And unexpected harms do hurt us most.
BAL. : Why, tell me, Don Lorenzo, tell me, man.
If ought concerns our honour and your own.
LOR. : Nor you, nor me, my lord, but both in one:
For I suspect—and the presumption's great—
That by those base confed'rates in our fault
Touching the death of Don Horatio,
We are betray'd to old Hieronimo.
BAL. : Betray'd, Lorenzo? tush! it cannot be.
LOR. : A guilty conscience, urged with the thought
Of former evils, easily cannot err:
I am persuaded—and dissuade me not—
That all's revealed to Hieronimo.
And therefore know that I have cast it thus:—

Enter PAGE.

But here's the page. How now? what news with thee?
PAGE : My lord, Serberine is slain.
BAL. : Who? Serberine, my man?
PAGE : Your highness' man, my lord.
LOR. : Speak, page, who murder'd him?
PAGE : He that is apprehended for the fact.
LOR. : Who?
PAGE : Pedringano.

BAL. : Is Serberine slain, that lov'd his lord so well ?
Injurious villain, murd'rer of his friend !

LOR. : Hath Pedringano murder'd Serberine ?
My lord, let me entreat you to take the pains
To exasperate and hasten his revenge
With your complaints unto my lord the king.
This their dissension breeds a greater doubt.

BAL. : Assure thee, Don Lorenzo, he shall die,
Or else his highness hardly shall deny.
Meanwhile I'll haste the marshal-sessions :
For die he shall for this his damnèd deed. [*Exit* BALTHAZAR.

LOR. : Why so, this fits our former policy,
And thus experience bids the wise to deal.
I lay the plot : he prosecutes the point ;
I set the trap : he breaks the worthless twigs,
And sees not that wherewith the bird was lim'd.
Thus hopeful men, that mean to hold their own,
Must look like fowlers to their dearest friends.
He runs to kill whom I have holp to catch,
And no man knows it was my reaching fetch.
'Tis hard to trust unto a multitude,
Or any one, in mine opinion,
When men themselves their secrets will reveal.

Enter a MESSENGER *with a letter.*

Boy——

PAGE : My lord ?

LOR. : What's he ?

MES. : I have a letter to your lordship.

LOR. : From whence ?

MES. : From Pedringano that's imprison'd.

LOR. : So he is in prison then ?

MES. : Ay, my good lord.

LOR. : What would he with us ?—He writes us here,
To stand good lord, and help him in distress.—
Tell him I have his letters, know his mind ;
And what we may, let him assure him of.
Fellow, begone : my boy shall follow thee. [*Exit* MESSENGER.
This works like wax ; yet once more try thy wits.
Boy, go, convey this purse to Pedringano ;
Thou know'st the prison, closely give it him,
And be advis'd that none be there about :
Bid him be merry still, but secret ;
And though the marshal-sessions be to-day,
Bid him not doubt of his delivery.
Tell him his pardon is already sign'd,
And thereon bid him boldly be resolv'd :
For, were he ready to be turnèd off—
As 'tis my will the uttermost be tried—
Thou with his pardon shalt attend him still.
Show him this box, tell him his pardon's in't ;
But open't not, and if thou lov'st thy life ;
But let him wisely keep his hopes unknown :

He shall not want while Don Lorenzo lives.
Away!

PAGE : I go, my lord, I run.

LOR. : But, sirrah, see that this be cleanly done. [*Exit* PAGE.
Now stands our fortune on a tickle point,
And now or never ends Lorenzo's doubts.
One only thing is uneffected yet,
And that's to see the executioner.
But to what end? I list not trust the air
With utterance of our pretence therein.
For fear the privy whisp'ring of the wind
Convey our words amongst unfriendly ears,
That lie too open to advantages.
E quel che voglio io, nessun lo sa;
Intendo io: quel mi basterà. [*Exit.*

SCENE V

Enter BOY, *with the box.*

BOY : My master hath forbidden me to look in this box; and, by my troth, 'tis likely, if he had not warned me, I should not have had so much idle time; for we men's-kind, in our minority, are like women in their uncertainty: that they are most forbidden, they will soonest attempt: so I now.—— By my bare honesty, here's nothing but the bare empty box; were it not sin against secrecy, I would say it were a piece of gentlemanlike knavery. I must go to Pedringano, and tell him his pardon is in this box; nay, I would have sworn it, had I not seen the contrary.—I cannot choose but smile to think how the villain will flout the gallows, scorn the audience, and descant on the hangman, and all presuming of his pardon from hence. Will't not be an odd jest for me to stand and grace every jest he makes, pointing my finger at this box, as who would say: "Mock on, here's thy warrant." Is't not a scurvy jest that a man should jest himself to death? Alas! poor Pedringano, I am in a sort sorry for thee; but if I should be hanged with thee, I cannot weep. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI

Enter HIERONIMO *and the* DEPUTY.

HIER. : Thus must we toil in other men's extremes,
That know not how to remedy our own;
And do them justice, when unjustly we,
For all our wrongs, can compass no redress.
But shall I never live to see the day,
That I may come, by justice of the heavens,
To know the cause that may my cares allay?
This toils my body, this consumeth age,
That only I to all men just must be,
And neither gods nor men be just to me.

DEP. : Worthy Hieronimo, your office asks.
A care to punish such as do transgress.

HIER. : So is't my duty to regard his death
Who, when he liv'd, deserv'd my dearest blood,
But come, for that we came for : let's begin ;
For here lies that which bids me to be gone.

Enter OFFICERS, BOY, and PEDRINGANO, *with a letter in his hand, bound.*

DEP. : Bring forth the prisoner, for the court is set.
PED. : Gramercy, boy, but it was time to come ;
For I had written to my lord anew
A nearer matter that concerneth him,
For fear his lordship had forgotten me.
But sith he hath remember'd me so well—
Come, come, come on, when shall we to this gear ?
HIER. : Stand forth, thou monster, murderer of men,
And here, for satisfaction of the world,
Confess thy folly, and repent thy fault ;
For there's thy place of execution.
PED. : This is short work : well, to your marshalship
First I confess—nor fear I death therefore— :
I am the man, 'twas I slew Serberine.
But, sir, then you think this shall be the place,
Where we shall satisfy you for this gear ?
DEP. : Ay, Pedringano.
PED. : Now I think not so.
HIER. : Peace, impudent ; for thou shalt find it so ;
For blood with blood shall, while I sit as judge,
Be satisfièd, and the law discharg'd.
And though myself cannot receive the like,
Yet will I see that others have their right.
Despatch : the fault's approvèd and confess'd,
And by our law he is condemn'd to die.
HANGM. : Come on, sir, are you ready ?
PED. : To do what, my fine, officious knave ?
HANGM. : To go to this gear.
PED. : O sir, you are too forward : thou wouldst fain furnish me with a halter, to disfurnish me of my habit. So I should go out of this gear, my raiment, into that gear, the rope. But, hangman, now I spy your knavery, I'll not change without boot, that's flat.
HANGM. : Come, sir.
PED. : So, then, I must up ?
HANGM. : No remedy.
PED. : Yes, but there shall be for my coming down.
HANGM. : Indeed, here's a remedy for that.
PED. : How ? be turned off ?
HANGM. : Ay, truly ; come, are you ready ? I pray, sir, despatch ; the day goes away.
PED. : What, do you hang by the hour ? if you do, I may chance to break your old custom.
HANGM. : Faith, you have reason ; for I am like to break your young neck.
PED. : Dost thou mock me, hangman ? pray God, I be not preserved to break your knave's pate for this.
HANGM. : Alas, sir ! you are a foot too low to reach it, and I hope you will never grow so high while I am in the office.

PED. : Sirrah, dost see yonder boy with the box in his hand ?
HANGM. : What, he that points to it with his finger ?
PED. : Ay, that companion.
HANGM. : I know him not ; but what of him ?
PED. : Dost thou think to live till his old doublet will make thee a new truss ?
HANGM. : Ay, and many a fair year after, to truss up many a honester man than either thou or he.
PED. : What hath he in his box, as thou thinkest ?
HANGM. : Faith, I cannot tell, nor I care not greatly ; methinks you should rather hearken to your soul's health.
PED. : Why, sirrah hangman, I take it that that is good for the body is likewise good for the soul : and it may be, in that box is balm for both.
HANGM. : Well, thou art even the merriest piece of man's flesh that e'er groaned at my office door !
PED. : Is your roguery become an office with a knave's name ?
HANGM. : Ay, and that shall all they witness that see you seal it with a thief's name.
PED. : I prithee, request this good company to pray with me.
HANGM. : Ay, marry, sir, this is a good motion : my masters, you see here's a good fellow.
PED. : Nay, nay, now I remember me, let them alone till some other time ; for now I have no great need.
HIER. : I have not seen a wretch so impudent.
O monstrous times, where murder's set so light,
And where the soul, that should be shrin'd in heaven,
Solely delights in interdicted things,
Still wand'ring in the thorny passages,
That intercepts itself of happiness.
Murder ! O bloody monster ! God forbid
A fault so foul should 'scape unpunishèd.
Despatch, and see this execution done !—
This makes me to remember thee, my son. [*Exit* HIERONIMO.
PED. : Nay, soft, no haste.
DEP. : Why, therefore stay you ? Have you hope of life ?
PED. : Why, ay !
HANGM. : As how ?
PED. Why, rascal, by my pardon from the king.
HANGM. : Stand you on that ? then you shall off with this.
[*He turns him off.*
DEP. : So, executioner ;—convey him hence ;
But let his body be unburièd :
Let not the earth be chokèd or infect
With that which heav'n contemns, and men neglect. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII

Enter HIERONIMO.

HIER. : Where shall I run to breathe abroad my woes,
My woes, whose weight hath wearièd the earth ?
Or mine exclaims, that have surcharg'd the air
With ceaseless plaints for my deceasèd son ?

The blust'ring winds, conspiring with my words,
At my lament have mov'd the leafless trees,
Disrob'd the meadows of their flower'd green,
Made mountains marsh with spring-tides of my tears,
And broken through the brazen gates of hell.
Yet still tormented is my tortur'd soul
With broken sighs and restless passions,
That wingèd mount ; and, hov'ring in the air,
Beat at the windows of the brightest heavens,
Soliciting for justice and revenge :
But they are plac'd in those empyreal heights,
Where, countermur'd with walls of diamond,
I find the place impregnable ; and they
Resist my woes, and give my words no way.

Enter HANGMAN *with a letter.*

HANGM. : O lord, sir ! God bless you, sir ! the man, sir, Petergade, sir, he that was so full of merry conceits—
HIER. : Well, what of him ?
HANGM. : O lord, sir, he went the wrong way ; the fellow had a fair commission to the contrary. Sir, here is his passport ; I pray you, sir, we have done him wrong.
HIER. : I warrant thee, give it me.
HANGM. : You will stand between the gallows and me ?
HIER. : Ay, ay.
HANGM. : I thank your lord worship. [*Exit* HANGMAN.
HIER. : And yet, though somewhat nearer me concerns,
I will, to ease the grief that I sustain,
Take truce with sorrow while I read on this.
" My lord, I write, as mine extremes requir'd,
That you would labour my delivery :
If you neglect, my life is desperate,
And in my death I shall reveal the troth.
You know, my lord, I slew him for your sake,
And was confed'rate with the prince and you ;
Won by rewards and hopeful promises,
I holp to murder Don Horatio too."—
Holp he to murder mine Horatio ?
And actors in th' accursèd tragedy
Wast thou, Lorenzo, Balthazar and thou,
Of whom my son, my son deserv'd so well ?
What have I heard, what have mine eyes beheld ?
O sacred heavens, may it come to pass
That such a monstrous and detested deed,
So closely smother'd, and so long conceal'd,
Shall thus by this be vengèd or reveal'd ?
Now see I what I durst not then suspect,
That Bellimperia's letter was not feign'd.
Nor feignèd she, though falsely they have wrong'd
Both her, myself, Horatio, and themselves.
Now may I make compare 'twixt hers and this,
Of every accident I ne'er could find
Till now, and now I feelingly perceive
They did what heav'n unpunish'd would not leave.

O false Lorenzo ! are these thy flatt'ring looks ?
Is this the honour that thou didst my son ?
And Balthazar—bane to thy soul and me !—
Was this the ransom he reserv'd thee for ?
Woe to the cause of these constrainèd wars !
Woe to thy baseness and captivity,
Woe to thy birth, thy body and thy soul,
Thy cursèd father, and thy conquer'd self !
And bann'd with bitter execrations be
The day and place where he did pity thee !
But wherefore waste I mine unfruitful words,
When naught but blood will satisfy my woes ?
I will go plain me to my lord the king,
And cry aloud for justice through the court,
Wearing the flints with these my wither'd feet ;
And either purchase justice by entreats,
Or tire them all with my revenging threats. [*Exit.*

SCENE VIII

Enter ISABELLA *and her* MAID.

ISAB. : So that, you say, this herb, will purge the eye,
And this, the head ?—
Ah !—but none of them will purge the heart !
No, there's no medicine left for my disease,
Nor any physic to recure the dead. [*She runs lunatic.*
Horatio ! O, where's Horatio ?
MAID : Good madam, affright not thus yourself
With outrage for your son—Horatio :
He sleeps in quiet in the Elysian fields.
ISAB. : Why, did I not give you gowns and goodly things,
Bought you a whistle and a whipstalk too,
To be revengèd on their villanies ?
MAID : Madam, these humours do torment my soul.
ISAB. : My soul—poor soul ! thou talk'st of things—
Thou know'st not what : my soul hath silver wings,
That mounts me up unto the highest heavens ;
To heav'n : ay, there sits my Horatio,
Back'd with a troop of fiery Cherubins.
Dancing about his newly healèd wounds,
Singing sweet hymns and chanting heav'nly notes :
Rare harmony to greet his innocence,
That died, ay died, a mirror in our days.
But say, where shall I find the men, the murderers,
That slew Horatio ? Whither shall I run
To find them out that murderèd my son ? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX

BELLIMPERIA *at a window.*

BEL. : What means this outrage that is offer'd me ?
Why am I thus sequester'd from the court ?
No notice ! Shall I not know the cause
Of these my secret and suspicious ills ?

Accursèd brother, unkind murderer,
Why bend'st thou thus thy mind to martyr me?
Hieronimo, why writ I of thy wrongs,
Or why art thou so slack in thy revenge?
Andrea, O Andrea! that thou saw'st
Me for thy friend Horatio handled thus,
And him for me thus causeless murderèd!—
Well, force perforce, I must constrain myself
To patience, and apply me to the time,
Till heav'n, as I have hop'd, shall set me free.

Enter CHRISTOPHIL.

CHRIS. : Come, madam Bellimperia, this may not be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE X

Enter LORENZO, BALTHAZAR, *and the* PAGE.

LOR. : Boy, talk no further ; thus far things go well.
Thou art assurèd that thou saw'st him dead?
PAGE : Or else, my lord, I live not.
LOR. : That's enough.
As for his resolution in his end,
Leave that to him with whom he sojourns now—
Here, take my ring and give it Christophil,
And bid him let my sister be enlarg'd,
And bring her hither straight.— [*Exit* PAGE.
This that I did was for a policy,
To smooth and keep the murder secret,
Which, as a nine-days' wonder, being o'erblown,
My gentle sister will I now enlarge.
BAL. : And time, Lorenzo : for my lord the duke,
You heard, enquirèd for her yester-night.
LOR. : Why, and my lord, I hope you heard me say
Sufficient reason why she kept away ;
But that's all one. My lord, you love her?
BAL. : Ay.
LOR. : Then in your love beware ; deal cunningly :
Salve all suspicions, only soothe me up ;
And if she hap to stand on terms with us—
As for her sweetheart and concealment so—
Jest with her gently : under feignèd jest
Are things conceal'd that else would breed unrest.—
But here she comes.

Enter BELLIMPERIA.

Now, sister?
BEL. : Sister?—No!
Thou art no brother, but an enemy ;
Else wouldst thou not have us'd thy sister so :
First, to affright me with thy weapons drawn,
And with extremes abuse my company ;
And then to hurry me, like whirlwind's rage,
Amidst a crew of thy confederates,
And clap me up, where none might come at me,
Nor I at any, to reveal my wrongs.

What madding fury did possess thy wits?
Or wherein is't that I offended thee?
LOR. : Advise you better, Bellimperia,
For I have done you no disparagement;
Unless, by more discretion than deserv'd,
I sought to save your honour and mine own.
BEL. : Mine honour? why, Lorenzo, wherein is't
That I neglect my reputation so,
As you, or any, need to rescue it?
LOR. : His highness and my father were resolv'd
To come confer with old Hieronimo,
Concerning certain matters of estate,
That by the viceroy was determined.
BEL. : And wherein was mine honour touch'd in that?
BAL. : Have patience, Bellimperia; hear the rest.
LOR. : Me (next in sight) as messenger they sent,
To give him notice that they were so nigh:
Now when I came, consorted with the prince,
And unexpected, in an arbour there,
Found Bellimperia with Horatio—
BEL. : How then?
LOR. : Why, then, remembering that old disgrace,
Which you for Don Andrea had endur'd,
And now were likely longer to sustain,
By being found so meanly accompanied,
Thought rather—for I knew no readier mean—
To thrust Horatio forth my father's way.
BAL. : And carry you obscurely somewhere else,
Lest that his highness should have found you there.
BEL. : Ev'n so, my lord? And you are witness
That this is true which he entreateth of?
You, gentle brother, forg'd this for my sake,
And you, my lord, were made his instrument?
A work of worth, worthy the noting too!
But what's the cause that you conceal'd me since?
LOR. : Your melancholy, sister, since the news
Of your first favourite Don Andrea's death,
My father's old wrath hath exasperate.
BAL. : And better was't for you, being in disgrace,
To absent yourself, and give his fury place.
BEL. : But why had I no notice of his ire?
LOR. : That were to add more fuel to your fire,
Who burnt like Ætna for Andrea's loss.
BEL. : Hath not my father then enquir'd for me?
LOR. : Sister, he hath, and thus excus'd I thee.
[*He whispereth in her ear.*
But, Bellimperia, see the gentle prince;
Look on thy love, behold young Balthazar,
Whose passions by thy presence are increas'd;
And in whose melancholy thou may'st see
Thy hate, his love; thy flight, his following thee.
BEL. : Brother, you are become an orator—
I know not, I, by what experience—
Too politic for me, past all compare,

Since last I saw you ; but content yourself :
The prince is meditating higher things.
BAL. : 'Tis of thy beauty then that conquers kings ;
Of those thy tresses, Ariadne's twines,
Wherewith my liberty thou hast surpris'd ;
Of that thine ivory front, my sorrow's map,
Wherein I see no hav'n to rest my hope.
BEL. : To love and fear, and both at once, my lord,
In my conceit, are things of more import
Than women's wits are to be busied with.
BAL. : 'Tis I that love.
BEL. : Whom ?
BAL. : Bellimperia.
BEL. : But I that fear.
BAL. : Whom ?
BEL. : Bellimperia.
LOR. : Fear yourself ?
BEL. : Ay, brother.
LOR. : How ?
BEL. : As those
That, what they love, are loath and fear to lose.
BAL. : Then, fair, let Balthazar your keeper be.
BEL. : No, Balthazar doth fear as well as we :
Et tremulo metui pavidum junxere timorem—
Est vanum stolidae proditionis opus.
LOR. : Nay, and you argue things so cunningly,
We'll go continue this discourse at court.
BAL. : Led by the loadstar of her heav'nly looks,
Wends poor, oppressèd Balthazar,
As o'er the mountains walks the wanderer,
Incertain to effect his pilgrimage. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XI

Enter two PORTINGALS, *and* HIERONIMO *meets them.*

1. By your leave, sir.
HIER. : [*'Tis neither as you think, nor as you think,*
Nor as you think ; you're wide all ;
These slippers are not mine, they were my son Horatio's.
My son ! and what's a son ? A thing begot
Within a pair of minutes—thereabout ;
A lump bred up in darkness, and doth serve
To ballace these light creatures we call women ;
And, at nine months' end, creeps forth to light.
What is there yet in a son,
To make a father dote, rave, or run mad ?
Being born, it pouts, cries, and breeds teeth.
What is there yet in a son ? He must be fed,
Be taught to go, and speak. Ay, or yet
Why might not a man love a calf as well ?
Or melt in passion o'er a frisking kid,
As for a son ? Methinks, a young bacon,
Or a fine little smooth horse colt,
Should move a man as much as doth a son :

For one of these, in very little time,
Will grow to some good use ; whereas a son,
The more he grows in stature and in years,
The more unsquar'd, unbevell'd, he appears,
Reckons his parents among the rank of fools,
Strikes care upon their heads with his mad riots ;
Makes them look old, before they meet with age.
This is a son !—And what a loss were this,
Consider'd truly ?——O, but my Horatio
Grew out of reach of these insatiate humours :
He lov'd his loving parents ;
He was my comfort, and his mother's joy,
The very arm that did hold up our house :
Our hopes were storèd up in him,
None but a damnèd murderer could hate him,
He had not seen the back of nineteen year,
When his strong arm unhors'd
The proud Prince Balthazar, and his great mind,
Too full of honour, took him to his mercy—
That valiant, but ignoble Portingal !
Well, heaven is heaven still !
And there is Nemesis, and Furies,
And things call'd whips,
And they sometimes do meet with murderers :
They do not always 'scape, that is some comfort.
Ay, ay, ay ; and then time steals on,
And steals, and steals, till violence leaps forth
Like thunder wrapped in a ball of fire,
And so doth bring confusion to them all.]
Good leave have you : nay, I pray you go,
For I'll leave you, if you can leave me so.

2. Pray you, which is the next way to my lord the duke's ?

HIER. : The next way from me.

1. To his house, we mean.

HIER. : O, hard by : 'tis yon house that you see.

2. You could not tell us if his son were there ?

HIER. : Who, my Lord Lorenzo ?

1. Ay, sir.

[*He goeth in at one door and comes out at another.*

HIER : O, forbear !
For other talk for us far fitter were.
But if you be importunate to know
The way to him, and where to find him out,
Then list to me, and I'll resolve your doubt.
There is a path upon your left-hand side,
That leadeth from a guilty conscience
Unto a forest of distrust and fear—
A darksome place, and dangerous to pass :
There shall you meet with melancholy thoughts,
Whose baleful humours if you but uphold,
It will conduct you to Despair and Death—
Whose rocky cliffs when you have once beheld,
Within a hugy dale of lasting night,
That, kindled with the world's iniquities,

Doth cast up filthy and detested fumes—:
Not far from thence, where murderers have built
A habitation for their cursèd souls,
There, in a brazen cauldron, fix'd by Jove,
In his fell wrath, upon a sulphur flame,
Yourselves shall find Lorenzo bathing him
In boiling lead and blood of innocents.

1. Ha, ha, ha !

HIER. : Ha, ha, ha ! Why, ha, ha, ha ! Farewell, good ha, ha, ha !
[*Exit.*

2. Doubtless this man is passing lunatic,
Or imperfection of his age doth make him dote.
Come, let's away to seek my lord the duke. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XII

Enter HIERONIMO, *with a poniard in one hand and a rope in the other.*

HIER. : Now, sir, perhaps I come and see the king ;
The king sees me, and fain would hear my suit :
Why, is not this a strange and seld-seen thing.
That standers-by with toys should strike me mute ?—
Go to, I see their shifts, and say no more.——
Hieronimo, 'tis time for thee to trudge :
Down by the dale that flows with purple gore,
Standeth a fiery tower ; there sits a judge
Upon a seat of steel and molten brass,
And 'twixt his teeth he holds a fire-brand;
That leads unto the lake where hell doth stand.
Away, Hieronimo ! to him be gone :
He'll do thee justice for Horatio's death.
Turn down this path : thou shalt be with him straight ;
Or this, and then thou need'st not take thy breath :
This way or that way !——Soft and fair, not so :
For if I hang or kill myself, let's know
Who will revenge Horatio's murther then ?
No, no ! fie, no ! pardon me, I'll none of that.
[*He flings away the dagger and halter.*
This way I'll take, and this way comes the king :
[*He takes them up again.*
And here I'll have a fling at him, that's flat ;
And, Balthazar, I'll be with thee to bring,
And thee, Lorenzo ! Here's the king—nay, stay ;
And here, ay here—there goes the hare away.

Enter KING, AMBASSADOR, CASTILE, *and* LORENZO.

KING : Now show, ambassador, what our viceroy saith :
Hath he receiv'd the articles we sent ?

HIER. : Justice, O, justice to Hieronimo.

LOR. : Back ! see'st thou not the king is busy ?

HIER. : O, is he so ?

KING : Who is he that interrupts our business ?

HIER. : Not I. Hieronimo, beware ! go by, go by !

AMB. : Renownèd King, he hath receiv'd and read
Thy kingly proffers, and thy promis'd league ;
And, as a man extremely over-joy'd
To hear his son so princely entertain'd,

Whose death he had so solemnly bewail'd,
This for thy further satisfaction,
And kingly love, he kindly lets thee know
First, for the marriage of his princely son
With Bellimperia, thy belovèd niece,
The news are more delightful to his soul,
Than myrrh or incense to the offended heavens,
In person, therefore, will he come himself,
To see the marriage rites solemnisèd,
And, in the presence of the court of Spain,
To knit a sure inextricable band
Of kingly love and everlasting league
Betwixt the crowns of Spain and Portingal.
There will he give his crown to Balthazar,
And make a queen of Bellimperia.

KING : Brother, how like you this our viceroy's love ?

CAST. : No doubt, my lord, it is an argument
Of honourable care to keep his friend,
And wondrous zeal to Balthazar his son ;
Nor am I least indebted to his grace,
That bends his liking to my daughter thus.

AMB. : Now last, dread lord, here hath his highness sent
(Although he send not that his son return)
His ransom due to Don Horatio.

HIER. : Horatio ! who calls Horatio ?

KING : And well remember'd : thank his majesty.
Here, see it given to Horatio.

HIER. : Justice, O, justice, justice, gentle king !

KING : Who is that ? Hieronimo ?

HIER. : Justice, O, justice ! O my son, my son !
My son, whom naught can ransom or redeem !

LOR. : Hieronimo, you are not well-advis'd.

HIER. : Away, Lorenzo, hinder me no more ;
For thou hast made me bankrupt of my bliss.
Give me my son ! you shall not ransom him !
Away ! I'll rip the bowels of the earth,
[*He diggeth with his dagger.*
And ferry over to th' Elysian plains,
And bring my son to show his deadly wounds.
Stand from about me !
I'll make a pickaxe of my poniard,
And here surrender up my marshalship ;
For I'll go marshal up the fiends in hell,
To be avengèd on you all for this.

KING : What means this outrage ?
Will none of you restrain his fury ?

HIER. : Nay, soft and fair ! you shall not need to strive :
For needs must he go that the devils drive. [*Exit.*

KING : What accident hath happ'd Hieronimo ?
I have not seen him to demean him so.

LOR. : My gracious lord, he is with extreme pride,
Conceiv'd of young Horatio his son—

And covetous of having to himself
The ransom of the young prince Balthazar—
Distract, and in a manner lunatic.
KING : Believe me, nephew, we are sorry for't :
This is the love that fathers bear their sons.
But, gentle brother, go give to him this gold,
The prince's ransom ; let him have his due.
For what he hath, Horatio shall not want ;
Haply Hieronimo hath need thereof.
LOR. : But if he be thus helplessly distract,
'Tis requisite his office be resign'd,
And giv'n to one of more discretion.
KING : We shall increase his melancholy so.
'Tis best that we see further in it first,
Till when ourself will hold exempt the place.
And, brother, now bring in the ambassador,
That he may be a witness of the match
'Twixt Balthazar and Bellimperia,
And that we may prefix a certain time,
Wherein the marriage shall be solemnis'd,
That we may have thy lord, the viceroy, here.
AMB. : Therein your highness highly shall content
His majesty, that longs to hear from hence.
KING : On, then, and hear you, lord ambassador—— [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XII*a*

Enter JAQUES *and* PEDRO.

JAQ. : *I wonder, Pedro, why our master thus*
At midnight sends us with our torches light,
When man, and bird, and beast, are all at rest,
Save those that watch for rape and bloody murder.
PED. : *O Jaques, know thou that our master's mind*
Is much distraught, since his Horatio died,
And—now his aged years should sleep in rest,
His heart in quiet—like a desp'rate man,
Grows lunatic and childish for his son.
Sometimes, as he doth at his table sit,
He speaks as if Horatio stood by him,
Then starting in a rage, falls on the earth,
Cries out "Horatio, where is my Horatio ?"
So that with extreme grief and cutting sorrow
There is not left in him one inch of man :
See, where he comes.

Enter HIERONIMO.

HIER. : *I pry through every crevice of each wall,*
Look on each tree, and search through every brake,
Beat at the bushes, stamp our grandam earth,
Dive in the water, and stare up to heaven ;
Yet cannot I behold my son Horatio.—
How now, who's there ? spirits, spirits ?
PED. : *We are your servants that attend you, sir.*
HIER. : *What make you with your torches in the dark ?*

PED. : *You bid us light them, and attend you here.*
HIER. : *No, no, you are deceiv'd ! not I ;—you are deceiv'd !*
Was I so mad to bid you light your torches now ?
Light me your torches at the mid of noon,
When-as the sun-god rides in all his glory ;
Light me your torches then.
PED. : *Then we burn daylight.*
HIER. : *Let it be burnt ; Night is a murd'rous slut,*
That would not have her treasons to be seen ;
And yonder pale-fac'd Hecate there, the moon,
Doth give consent to that is done in darkness,
And all those stars that gaze upon her face,
Are aglets on her sleeve, pins on her train ;
Ant those that should be powerful and divine,
Do sleep in darkness, when they most should shine.
PED. : *Provoke them not, fair sir, with tempting words :*
The heav'ns are gracious, and your miseries
And sorrow makes you speak, you know not what.
HIER. : *Villain, thou liest ! and thou dost nought*
But tell me I am mad : thou liest, I am not mad !
I know thee to be Pedro, and he Jaques.
I'll prove it to thee ; and were I mad, how could I ?
Where was she that same night,
When my Horatio was murder'd ?
She should have shone : search thou the book.—Had the moon shone,
In my boy's face there was a kind of grace,
That I know—nay, I do know—had the murd'rer seen him,
His weapon would have fall'n and cut the earth,
Had he been fram'd of naught but blood and death,
Alack ! when mischief doth it knows not what,
What shall we say to mischief ?

Enter ISABELLA.

ISAB. : *Dear Hieronimo, come in a-doors ;*
O, seek not means so to increase thy sorrow.
HIER. : *Indeed, Isabella, we do nothing here ;*
I do not cry : ask Pedro, and ask Jaques ;
Not I indeed ; we are very merry, very merry.
ISAB. : *How ? be merry here, be merry here ?*
Is not this the place, and this the very tree,
Where my Horatio died, where he was murder'd ?
HIER. : *Was—do not say what : let her weep it out.*
This was the tree ; I set it of a kernel :
And when our hot Spain could not let it grow,
But that the infant and the human sap
Began to wither, duly twice a morning
Would I be sprinkling it with fountain-water.
At last it grew and grew, and bore and bore,
Till at the length
It grew a gallows, and did bear our son :
It bore thy fruit and mine—O wicked, wicked plant !
[One knocks within at the door.
See, who knock there.
PED. : *It is a painter, sir.*

HIER. : *Bid him come in, and paint some comfort,*
For surely there's none lives but painted comfort.
Let him come in !—One knows not what may chance :
God's will that I should set this tree !—but even so
Masters ungrateful servants rare from nought,
And then they hate them that did bring them up.

Enter the PAINTER.

PAINT. : *God bless you, sir.*
HIER. : *Wherefore ? why, thou scornful villain ?*
How, where, or by what means should I be bless'd ?
ISAB. : *What wouldst thou have, good fellow ?*
PAINT. : *Justice, madam.*
HIER. : *O ambitious beggar !*
Wouldst thou have that that lives not in the world ?
Why, all the undelved mines cannot buy
An ounce of justice !
'Tis a jewel so inestimable. I tell thee,
God hath engross'd all justice in his hands,
And there is none but what comes from him.
PAINT. : *O, then I see*
That God must right me for my murder'd son.
HIER. : *How, was thy son murder'd ?*
PAINT. : *Ay, sir ; no man did hold a son so dear.*
HIER. : *What, not as thine ? that's a lie,*
As massy as the earth : I had a son,
Whose least unvalu'd hair did weigh
A thousand of thy sons : and he was murder'd.
PAINT. : *Alas, sir, I had no more but he.*
HIER. : *Nor I, nor I : but this same one of mine*
Was worth a legion. But all is one.
Pedro, Jaques, go in a-doors ; Isabella, go,
And this good fellow here and I
Will range this hideous orchard up and down,
Like to two lions reavèd of their young.
Go in a-doors, I say. [*Exeunt.* The PAINTER and he sits down.
Come, let's talk wisely now.
Was thy son murder'd ?
PAINT. : *Ay, sir.*
HIER. : *So was mine.*
How dost take it ? art thou not sometimes mad ?
Is there no tricks that comes before thine eyes ?
PAINT. : *O Lord, yes, sir.*
HIER. : *Art a painter ? canst paint me a tear, or a wound, a groan, or a sigh ? canst paint me such a tree as this ?*
PAINT. : *Sir, I am sure you have heard of my painting : my name's Bazardo.*
HIER. : *Bazardo ! afore God, an excellent fellow. Look you, sir, do you see, I'd have you paint one for my gallery, in your oil colours matted, and draw me five years younger than I am—do ye see, sir, let five years go ; let them go like the marshal of Spain—my wife Isabella standing by me, with a speaking look to my son Horatio, which should intend to this or some such-like purpose : " God bless thee, my sweet son " ; and my hand leaning upon his head, thus, sir ; do you see ?—may it be done ?*

PAINT. : *Very well, sir.*

HIER. : *Nay, I pray, mark me, sir : then, sir, would I have you paint me this tree, this very tree. Canst paint a doleful cry ?*

PAINT. : *Seemingly, sir.*

HIER. : *Nay, it should cry ; but all is one. Well, sir, paint me a youth run through and through with villains' swords, hanging upon this tree. Canst thou draw a murderer ?*

PAINT. : *I'll warrant you, sir ; I have the pattern of the most notorious villains that ever lived in all Spain.*

HIER. : *O, let them be worse, worse : stretch thine art, and let their beards be of Judas his own colour ; and let their eye-brows jutty over : in any case observe that. Then sir, after some violent noise, bring me forth in my shirt, and my gown under mine arm, with my torch in my hand, and my sword reared up thus :—and with these words :*

" What noise is this ? who calls Hieronimo ? "

May it be done ?

PAINT. : *Yea, sir.*

HIER. : *Well, sir ; then bring me forth, bring me through alley and alley, still with a distracted countenance going along, and let my hair heave up my night-cap. Let the clouds scowl, make the moon dark, the stars extinct, the winds blowing, the bells tolling, the owls shrieking, the toads croaking, the minutes jarring, and the clock striking twelve. And then at last, sir, starting, behold a man hanging, and tottering, as you know the wind will wave a man, and I with a trice to cut him down. And looking upon him by the advantage of my torch, find it to be my son Horatio. There you may show a passion, there you may show a passion ! Draw me like Old Priam of Troy, crying : " The house is a-fire, the house is a-fire, as the torch over my head ! " Make me curse, make me rave, make me cry, make me mad, make me well again, make me curse hell, invocate heaven, and in the end leave me in a trance—and so forth.*

PAINT. : *And is this the end ?*

HIER. : *O no, there is no end : the end is death and madness ! As I am never better than when I am mad : then methinks I am a brave fellow ; then I do wonders : but reason abuseth me, and there's the torment, there's the hell. At the last, sir, bring me to one of the murderers ; were he as strong as Hector, thus would I tear and drag him up and down.*

[He beats the painter in, then comes out again, with a book in his hand.

SCENE XIII

Enter HIERONIMO, *with a book in his hand.*

Vindicta mihi !
Ay, heav'n will be reveng'd of every ill ;
Nor will they suffer murder unrepaid.
Then stay, Hieronimo, attend their will :
For mortal men may not appoint their time :—
" Per scelus semper tutum est sceleribus iter."
Strike, and strike home, where wrong is offer'd thee ;
For evils unto ills conductors be,
And death's the worst of resolution.
For he that thinks with patience to contend
To quiet life, his life shall easily end.—

" *Fata si miseros juvant, habes salutem ;*
Fata si vitam negant, habes sepulchrum : "
If destiny thy miseries do ease,
Then hast thou health, and happy shalt thou be ;
If destiny deny thee life, Hieronimo,
Yet shalt thou be assurèd of a tomb— :
If neither, yet let this thy comfort be :
Heav'n cov'reth him that hath no burial.
And to conclude, I will revenge his death !
But how ? not as the vulgar wits of men,
With open, but inevitable ills,
As by a secret, yet a certain mean,
Which under kindship will be cloakèd best.
Wise men will take their opportunity
Closely and safely, fitting things to time.—
But in extremes advantage hath no time ;
And therefore all times fit not for revenge.
Thus therefore will I rest me in unrest,
Dissembling quiet in unquietness,
Not seeming that I know their villanies,
That my simplicity many make them think,
That ignorantly I will let all slip ;
For ignorance, I wot, and well they know,
Remedium malorum iners est.
Nor ought avails it me to menace them
Who, as a wintry storm upon a plain,
Will bear me down with their nobility.
No, no, Hieronimo, thou must enjoin
Thine eyes to observation, and thy tongue
To milder speeches than thy spirit affords,
Thy heart to patience, and thy hands to rest,
Thy cap to courtesy, and thy knee to bow,
Till to revenge thou know, when, where and how.
[*A noise within.*
How now, what noise ? what coil is that you keep ?

Enter a SERVANT.

SERV. : Here are a sort of poor petitioners,
That are importunate, and it shall please you, sir,
That you should plead their cases to the king.
HIER. : That I should plead their several actions ?
Why, let them enter, and let me see them.

Enter three CITIZENS *and an* OLD MAN.

1. So,
I tell you this : for learning and for law,
There is not any advocate in Spain
That can prevail, or will take half the pain
That he will, in pursuit of equity.
HIER. : Come near, you men, that thus importune me.—
(*Aside.*) Now must I bear a face of gravity ;
For thus I us'd, before my marshalship,
To plead in causes as corregidor.—
Come on, sirs, what's the matter ?
2. Sir, an action.

HIER. : Of battery ?
1. Mine of debt.
HIER. : Give place.
2. No, sir, mine is an action of the case.
3. Mine an *ejectione firmae* by a lease.
HIER. : Content you, sirs ; are you determinèd
That I should plead your several actions ?
1. Ay, sir, and here's my declaration.
2. And here's my band.
3. And here's my lease. [*They give him papers.*
HIER. : But wherefore stands yon silly man so mute,
With mournful eyes and hands to heav'n uprear'd ?
Come hither, father, let me know thy cause,
SENEX. : O worthy sir, my cause, but slightly known,
May move the hearts of warlike Myrmidons,
And melt the Corsic rocks with ruthful tears.
HIER. : Say, father, tell me what's thy suit ?
SENEX. : No, sir, could my woes
Give way unto my most distressful words,
Then should I not in paper, as you see,
With ink bewray what blood began in me.
HIER. : What's here ? " The humble supplication
Of Don Bazulto for his murder'd son."
SENEX. : Ay, sir.
HIER. : No, sir, it was my murder'd son :
O my son, my son, O my son Horatio !
But mine, or thine, Bazulto, be content.
Here, take my handkercher, and wipe thine eyes,
Whiles wretched I in thy mishaps may see
The lively portrait of my dying self.
[*He draweth out a bloody napkin.*
O no, not this ; Horatio, this was thine ;
And when I dy'd it in thy dearest blood,
This was a token 'twixt thy soul and me,
That of thy death revengèd I should be.
But here, take this, and this—what, my purse ?—
Ay, this, and that, and all of them are thine ;
For all as one are our extremities.
1. O, see the kindness of Hieronimo !
2. This gentleness shows him a gentleman.
HIER. : See, see, O see thy shame, Hieronimo ;
See here a loving father to his son !
Behold the sorrows and the sad laments,
That he deliv'reth for his son's decease !
If love's effects so strive in lesser things,
If love enforce such moods in meaner wits,
If love express such power in poor estates :
Hieronimo, when as a raging sea,
Toss'd with the wind and tide, o'erturnest then
The upper billows course of waves to keep,
Whilst lesser waters labour in the deep :
Then sham'st thou not, Hieronimo, to neglect
The sweet revenge of thy Horatio ?
Thou on this earth justice will not be found,

I'll down to hell, and in this passion
Knock at the dismal gates of Pluto's court,
Getting by force, as once Alcides did,
A troop of Furies and tormenting hags
To torture Don Lorenzo and the rest.
Yet lest the triple-headed porter should
Deny my passage to the slimy strand,
The Thracian poet thou shalt counterfeit :
Come on, old father, be my Orpheus,
And if thou canst no notes upon the harp,
Then sound the burden of thy sore heart's-grief,
Till we do gain that Proserpine may grant
Revenge on them that murderèd my son.
Then will I rent and tear them, thus and thus,
Shiv'ring their limbs in pieces with my teeth. [*Tears the papers.*

1. O sir, my declaration ! [*Exit* HIERONIMO, *and they after.*
2. Save my bond !

Enter HIERONIMO.

2. Save my bond !
3. Alas, my lease ! it cost me ten pounds,
And you, my lord, have torn the same.

HIER. : That cannot be, I gave it never a wound ;
Show me one drop of blood fall from the same :
How is it possible I should slay it then ?
Tush, no ; run after, catch me if you can.
[*Exeunt all but the* OLD MAN. BAZULTO *remains till* HIERONIMO
enters again, who, staring him in the face, speaks.

HIER. : And art thou come, Horatio, from the depth,
To ask for justice in this upper earth,
To tell thy father thou art unreveng'd,
To wring more tears from Isabella's eyes,
Whose lights are dimm'd with over-long laments ?
Go back, my son, complain to Aeacus,
For here's no justice ; gentle boy, be gone,
For justice is exilèd from the earth :
Hieronimo will bear thee company.
Thy mother cries on righteous Rhadamanth
For just revenge against the murderers.

SENEX. : Alas, my lord, whence springs this troubled speech ?

HIER. : But let me look on my Horatio.
Sweet boy, how art thou chang'd in death's black shade !
Had Proserpine no pity on thy youth,
But suffer'd thy fair crimson-colour'd spring
With wither'd winter to be blasted thus ?
Horatio, thou art older than thy father :
Ah, ruthless fate, that favour thus transforms !

BAZ. : Ay, my good lord, I am not your young son.

HIER. : What, not my son ? thou then a Fury art,
Sent from the empty kingdom of black night
To summon me to make appearance
Before grim Minos and just Rhadamanth,
To plague Hieronimo that is remiss,
And seeks not vengeance for Horatio's death.

BAZ. : I am a grievèd man, and not a ghost,
That came for justice for my murder'd son.
HIER. : Ay, now I know thee, now thou nam'st thy son :
Thou art the lively image of my grief ;
Within thy face, my sorrows I may see.
Thy eyes are gumm'd with tears, thy cheeks are wan,
Thy forehead troubled, and thy mutt'ring lips
Murmur sad words abruptly broken off ;
By force of windy sighs thy spirit breathes,
And all this sorrow riseth for thy son :
And selfsame sorrow feel I for my son.
Come in, old man, thou shalt to Isabel ;
Lean on my arm : I thee, thou me, shalt stay,
And thou, and I, and she will sing a song,
Three parts in one, but all of discords fram'd— :
Talk not of chords, but let us now be gone,
For with a cord Horatio was slain. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XIV

Enter KING OF SPAIN, *the* DUKE, VICEROY, *and* LORENZO, BALTHAZAR, DON PEDRO, *and* BELLIMPERIA.

KING : Go, brother, 'tis the Duke of Castile's cause ;
Salute the Viceroy in our name.
CAST. : I go.
VIC. : Go forth, Don Pedro, for thy nephew's sake,
And greet the Duke of Castile.
PED. : It shall be so.
KING : And now to meet these Portuguese :
For as we now are, so sometimes were these,
Kings and commanders of the western Indies.
Welcome, brave Viceroy, to the court of Spain,
And welcome all his honourable train !
'Tis not unknown to us for why you come,
Or have so kingly cross'd the seas :
Sufficeth it, in this we note the troth
And more than common love you lend to us.
So is it that mine honourable niece
(For it beseems us now that it be known)
Already is betroth'd to Balthazar :
And by appointment and our condescent
To-morrow are they to be marrièd.
To this intent we entertain thyself,
Thy followers, their pleasure, and our peace.
Speak, men of Portingal, shall it be so ?
If ay, say so ; if not, say flatly no.
VIC. : Renownèd King, I come not, as thou think'st,
With doubtful followers, unresolvèd men,
But such as have upon thine articles
Confirm'd thy motion, and contented me.
Know, sovereign, I come to solemnise
The marriage of thy belovèd niece,
Fair Bellimperia, with my Balthazar,
With thee, my son ; whom sith I live to see,

Here take my crown, I give it her and thee ;
And let me live a solitary life,
In ceaseless prayers,
To think how strangely heav'n hath thee preserv'd.
KING : See, brother, see, how nature strives in him !
Come, worthy Viceroy, and accompany
Thy friend with thine extremities :
A place more private fits this princely mood.
VIC. : Or here, or where your highness thinks it good.

[*Exeunt all but* CASTILE *and* LORENZO.

SCENE XV

CASTILE, LORENZO.

CAST. : Nay, stay, Lorenzo, let me talk with you.
See'st thou this entertainment of these kings ?
LOR. : I do, my lord, and joy to see the same.
CAST. : And know'st thou why this meeting is ?
LOR. : For her, my lord, whom Balthazar doth love,
And to confirm their promis'd marriage.
CAST. : She is thy sister ?
LOR. : Who, Bellimperia ? ay,
My gracious lord, and this is the day,
That I have long'd so happily to see.
CAST. : Thou wouldst be loath that any fault of thine
Should intercept her in her happiness ?
LOR. : Heaven's will not let Lorenzo err so much.
CAST. : Why then, Lorenzo, listen to my words :
It is suspected and reported too,
That thou, Lorenzo, wrong'st Hieronimo,
And in his suits towards his majesty
Still keep'st him back, and seek'st to cross his suit.
LOR. : That I, my lord—— ?
CAST. : I tell thee, son, myself have heard it said,
When (to my sorrow) I have been asham'd
To answer for thee, though thou art my son.
Lorenzo, know'st thou not the common love,
And kindness that Hieronimo hath won
By his deserts within the court of Spain ?
Or see'st thou not the king my brother's care
In his behalf, and to procure his health ?
Lorenzo, shouldst thou thwart his passions,
And he exclaim against thee to the king,
What honour were't in this assembly,
Or what a scandal were't among the kings
To hear Hieronimo exclaim on thee ?
Tell me—and look thou tell me truly too—
Whence grows the ground of this report in court ?
LOR. : My lord, it lies not in Lorenzo's power
To stop the vulgar, liberal of their tongues :
A small advantage makes a water-breach,
And no man lives that long contenteth all.
CAST. : Myself have seen thee busy to keep back
Him and his supplications from the king.

LOR. : Yourself, my lord, hath seen his passions,
That ill beseem'd the presence of a king :
And for I pitied him in his distress,
I held him thence with kind and courteous words,
As free from malice to Hieronimo
As to my soul, my lord.
CAST. : Hieronimo, my son, mistakes thee then.
LOR. : My gracious father, believe me, so he doth.
But what's a silly man, distract in mind
To think upon the murder of his son ?
Alas ! how easy is it for him to err !
But for his satisfaction and the world's,
'Twere good, my lord, that Hieronimo and I
Were reconcil'd, if he misconster me.
CAST. : Lorenzo, thou hast said : it shall be so.
Go one of you, and call Hieronimo.

Enter BALTHAZAR *and* BELLIMPERIA.

BAL. : Come, Bellimperia, Balthazar's content,
My sorrow's ease and sovereign of my bliss,
Sith heaven hath ordain'd thee to be mine :
Disperse those clouds and melancholy looks,
And clear them up with those thy sun-bright eyes,
Wherein my hope and heaven's fair beauty lies.
BEL. : My looks, my lord, are fitting for my love.
Which, new-begun, can show no brighter yet.
BAL. : New-kindled flames should burn as morning sun.
BEL. : But not too fast, lest heat and all be done.
I see my lord my father.
BAL. : Truce, my love ;
I'll go salute him.
CAST. : Welcome, Balthazar.
Welcome, brave prince, the pledge of Castile's peace !
And welcome, Bellimperia !—How now, girl ?
Why com'st thou sadly to salute us thus ?
Content thyself, for I am satisfied :
It is not now as when Andrea liv'd ;
We have forgotten and forgiven that,
And thou art gracèd with a happier love.—
But, Balthazar, here comes Hieronimo ;
I'll have a word with him.

Enter HIERONIMO *and a* SERVANT.

HIER. : And where's the duke ?
SERV. : Yonder.
HIER. : Ev'n so.—
What new device have they devisèd, trow ?
Pocas palabras ! mild as the lamb !
Is't I will be reveng'd ? No, I am not the man.—
CAST. : Welcome, Hieronimo.
LOR. : Welcome, Hieronimo.
BAL. : Welcome, Hieronimo.
HIER. : My lords, I thank you for Horatio.
CAST. : Hieronimo, the reason that I sent
To speak with you, is this.

HIER. : What, so short ?
Then I'll be gone, I thank you for't.
CAST. : Nay, stay, Hieronimo.!—go call him, son.
LOR. : Hieronimo, my father craves a word with you.
HIER. : With me, sir ? why, my lord, I thought you had done.
LOR. : No ; (*aside*) would he had !
CAST. : Hieronimo, I hear.
You find yourself aggrievèd at my son,
Because you have not access unto the king ;
And say 'tis he that intercepts your suits.
HIER. : Why, is not this a miserable thing, my lord ?
CAST. : Hieronimo, I hope you have no cause,
And would be loath that one of your deserts
Should once have reason to suspect my son,
Consid'ring how I think of you myself.
HIER. : Your son Lorenzo ! whom, my noble lord ?
The hope of Spain, mine honourable friend ?
Grant me the combat of them, if they dare :
[*Draws out his sword.*
I'll meet him face to face, to tell me so !
These be the scandalous reports of such
As love not me, and hate my lord too much :
Should I suspect Lorenzo would prevent
Or cross my suit ; that lov'd my son so well ?
My lord, I am asham'd it should be said.
LOR. : Hieronimo, I never gave you cause.
HIER. : My good lord, I know you did not.
CAST. : There then pause ;
And for the satisfaction of the world,
Hieronimo, frequent my homely house,
The Duke of Castile, Cyprian's ancient seat ;
And when thou wilt, use me, my son, and it :
But here, before Prince Balthazar and me,
Embrace each other, and be perfect friends.
HIER. : Ay, marry, my lord, and shall.
Friends, quoth he ? see, I'll be friends with you all :
Especially with you, my lovely lord ;
For divers causes it is fit for us
That we be friends : the world's suspicious,
And men may think what we imagine not.
BAL. : Why, this is friendly done, Hieronimo.
LOR. : And that I hope : old grudges are forgot ?
HIER. : What else ? it were a shame it should not be so.
CAST. : Come on, Hieronimo, at my request ;
Let us entreat your company to-day. [*Exeunt.*
HIER. : Your lordship's to command.—Pah ! keep your way :
Chi mi fa più carezze che non suole,
Tradito mi ha, o tradir mi voule. [*Exit.*

SCENE XVI

Enter GHOST *and* REVENGE.

GHOST : Awake, Erichtho ! Cerberus, awake !
Solicit Pluto, gentle Proserpine !
To combat, Acheron and Erebus !

For ne'er, by Styx and Phlegethon in hell,
O'er-ferried Charon to the fiery lakes
Such fearful sights, as poor Andrea sees.
Revenge, awake !

REVENGE : Awake ? for why ?

GHOST : Awake, Revenge ; for thou art ill-advis'd
To sleep—awake ! what, thou art warn'd to watch !

REVENGE : Content thyself, and do not trouble me.

GHOST : Awake, Revenge, if love—as love hath had—
Have yet the power or prevalence in hell !
Hieronimo with Lorenzo is join'd in league,
And intercepts our passage to revenge :
Awake, Revenge, or we are woe-begone !

REVENGE : Thus worldlings ground, what they have dream'd, upon,
Content thyself, Andrea : though I sleep,
Yet is my mood soliciting their souls.
Sufficeth thee that poor Hieronimo
Cannot forget his son Horatio.
Nor dies Revenge, although he sleep awhile ;
For in unquiet quietness is feign'd
And slumb'ring is a common worldly wile.—
Behold, Andrea, for an instance, how
Revenge hath slept, and then imagine thou,
What 'tis to be subject to destiny.

Enter a Dumb-Show.

GHOST : Awake, Revenge ; reveal this mystery.

REVENGE : Lo ! the two first the nuptial torches bore
As brightly burning as the mid-day's sun ;
But after them doth Hymen hie as fast,
Clothèd in sable and a saffron robe,
And blows them out, and quencheth them with blood,
As discontent that things continue so.

GHOST : Sufficeth me ; thy meaning's understood,
And thanks to thee and those infernal powers,
That will not tolerate a lover's woe.—
Rest thee, for I will sit to see the rest.

REVENGE : Then argue not, for thou hast thy request. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I

Enter BELLIMPERIA *and* HIERONIMO

BEL. : Is this the love thou bear'st Horatio ?
Is this the kindness that thou counterfeit'st ?
Are these the fruits of thine incessant tears ?
Hieronimo, are these thy passions,
Thy protestations and thy deep laments,
That thou wert wont to weary men withal ?
O unkind father ! O deceitful world !
With what excuses canst thou show thyself
From this dishonour and the hate of men ?

Thus to neglect the loss and life of him
Whom both my letters and thine own belief
Assures thee to be causeless slaughterèd !
Hieronimo, for shame, Hieronimo,
Be not a history to after-times
Of such ingratitude unto thy son :
Unhappy mothers of such children then,
But monstrous fathers to forget so soon
The death of those, whom they with care and cost
Have tender'd so, thus careless should be lost.
Myself, a stranger in respect of thee,
So lov'd his life, as still I wish their deaths.
Nor shall his death be unreveng'd by me,
Although I bear it out for fashion's sake :
For here I swear, in sight of heav'n and earth,
Should thou neglect the love thou shouldst retain,
And give it over, and devise no more,
Myself should send their hateful souls to hell,
That wrought his downfall with extremest death.

HIER. : But may it be that Bellimperia
Vows such revenge as she hath deign'd to say ?
Why, then I see that heav'n applies our drift,
And all the saints do sit soliciting
For vengeance on those cursèd murtherers.
Madam, 'tis true, and now I find it so :
I found a letter, written in your name,
And in that letter, how Horatio died.
Pardon, O pardon, Bellimperia,
My fear and care in not believing it ;
Nor think I thoughtless think upon a mean
To let his death be unreveng'd at full.
And here I vow—so you but give consent,
And will conceal my resolution—:
I will ere long determine of their deaths
That causeless thus have murderèd my son.

BEL. : Hieronimo, I will consent, conceal,
And ought that may effect for thine avail,
Join with thee to revenge Horatio's death.

HIER. : On, then ; and whatsoever I devise,
Let me entreat you, grace my practices,
For why the plot's already in mine head.
Here they are.

Enter BALTHAZAR *and* LORENZO.

BAL. : How now, Hieronimo ?
What, courting Bellimperia ?

HIER. : Ay, my lord ;
Such courting as (I promise you) :
She hath my heart, but you, my lord, have hers.

LOR. : But now, Hieronimo, or never,
We are to entreat your help.

HIER. : My help ?
Why, my good lords, assure yourselves of me ;
For you have giv'n me cause— :
Ay, by my faith have you !

BAL. : It pleased you,
At the entertainment of the ambassador,
To grace the king so much as with a show.
Now, were your study so well furnishèd,
As for the passing of the first night's sport
To entertain my father with the like,
Or any such-like pleasing motion,
Assure yourself, it would content them well.
HIER. : Is this all ?
BAL. : Ay, this is all.
HIER. : Why then, I'll fit you : say no more.
When I was young, I gave my mind
And plied myself to fruitless poetry ;
Which though it profit the professor naught,
Yet is it passing pleasing to the world.
LOR. : And how for that ?
HIER. : Marry, my good lord, thus :
(And yet, methinks, you are too quick with us)— :
When in Toledo there I studièd,
It was my chance to write a tragedy :
See here, my lords— [*He shows them a book.*
Which, long forgot, I found this other day.
Now would your lordships favour me so much
As but to grace me with your acting it—
I mean each one of you to play a part—
Assure you it will prove most passing strange,
And wondrous plausible to that assembly.
BAL. : What, would you have us play a tragedy ?
HIER. : Why, Nero thought it no disparagement,
And kings and emperors have ta'en delight.
To make experience of their wits in plays.
LOR. : Nay, be not angry, good Hieronimo ;
The prince but ask'd a question.
BAL. : In faith, Hieronimo, and you be in earnest,
I'll make one.
LOR. : And I another.
HIER. : Now, my good lord, could you entreat
Your sister Bellimperia to make one ?
For what's a play without a woman in it.
BEL. : Little entreaty shall serve me, Hieronimo ;
For I must needs be employèd in your play.
HIER. : Why, this is well : I tell you, lordings,
It was determinèd to have been acted,
By gentlemen and scholars too,
Such as could tell what to speak.
BAL. : And now
It shall be play'd by princes and courtiers,
Such as can tell how to speak :
If, as it is our country manner,
You will but let us know the argument.
HIER. : That shall I roundly. The chronicles of Spain
Record this written of a knight of Rhodes :
He was betroth'd, and wedded at the length,
To one Perseda, an Italian dame,

Whose beauty ravish'd all that her beheld,
Especially the soul of Soliman,
Who at the marriage was the chiefest guest.
By sundry means sought Soliman to win
Perseda's love, and could not gain the same.
Then 'gan he break his passions to a friend,
One of his bashaws, whom he held full dear ;
Her had this bashaw long solicited,
And saw she was not otherwise to be won,
But by her husband's death, this knight of Rhodes,
Whom presently by treachery he slew.
She, stirr'd with an exceeding hate therefore,
As cause of this slew Soliman,
And, to escape the bashaw's tyranny,
Did stab herself : and this the tragedy.

LOR. : O excellent !

BEL. : But say, Hieronimo, what then became
Of him that was the bashaw ?

HIER. : Marry thus :
Mov'd with remorse of his misdeeds,
Ran to a mountain-top, and hung himself.

BAL. : But which of us is to perform that part ?

HIER. : O, that will I, my lords : make no doubt of it :
I'll play the murderer, I warrant you ;
For I already have conceited that.

BAL. : And what shall I ?

HIER. : Great Soliman, the Turkish emperor.

LOR. : And I ?

HIER. : Erastus, the knight of Rhodes.

BEL. : And I ?

HIER. : Perseda, chaste and resolute.—
And here, my lords, are several abstracts drawn,
For each of you to note your parts,
And act it, as occasion's offer'd you.
You must provide a Turkish cap,
A black mustachio and a falchion ;
[*Gives a paper to* BALTHAZAR.
You with a cross, like to a knight of Rhodes ;
[*Gives another to* LORENZO.
And, madam, you must attire yourself
[*He giveth* BELLIMPERIA *another.*
Like Phœbe, Flora, or the huntress,
Which to your discretion shall seem best.
And as for me, my lords, I'll look to one,
And, with the ransom that the viceroy sent,
So furnish and perform this tragedy,
As all the world shall say, Hieronimo.
Was liberal in gracing of it so.

BAL. : Hieronimo, methinks a comedy were better.

HIER. : A comedy ?
Fie ! comedies are fit for common wits :
But to present a kingly troop withal,
Give me a stately-written tragedy ;

Tragœdia cothurnata, fitting kings,
Containing matter, and not common things.
My lords, all this must be perform'd,
As fitting for the first night's revelling.
The Italian tragedians were so sharp of wit,
That in one hour's meditation
They would perform anything in action.

LOR. : And well it may ; for I have seen the like
In Paris 'mongst the French tragedians.

HIER. : In Paris ? mass ! and well remembered !
There's one thing more that rests for us to do.

BAL. : What's that, Hieronimo ? forget not anything.

HIER. : Each one of us
Must act his part in unknown languages,
That it may breed the more variety :
As you, my lord, in Latin, I in Greek,
You in Italian, and for because I know
That Bellimperia hath practised the French,
In courtly French shall all her phrases be.

BEL. : You mean to try my cunning then, Hieronimo ?

BAL. : But this will be a mere confusion,
And hardly shall we all be understood.

HIER. : It must be so ; for the conclusion
Shall prove the invention and all was good :
And I myself in an oration,
And with a strange and wondrous show besides,
That I will have there behind a curtain,
Assure yourself, shall make the matter known :
And all shall be concluded in one scene,
For there's no pleasure ta'en in tediousness.

BAL. : How like you this ?

LOR. : Why, thus my lord :
We must resolve to soothe his humours up.

BAL. : On then, Hieronimo ; farewell till soon.

HIER. : You'll ply this gear ?

LOR. : I warrant you. [*Exeunt all but* HIERONIMO.

HIER. : Why so :
Now shall I see the fall of Babylon,
Wrought by the heav'ns in this confusion.
And if the world like not this tragedy,
Hard is the hap of old Hieronimo. [*Exit.*

SCENE II

Enter ISABELLA *with a weapon.*

ISAB. : Tell me no more !—O monstrous homicides !
Since neither piety nor pity moves
The king to justice or compassion,
I will revenge myself upon this place,
Where thus they murder'd my beloved son.
[*She cuts down the arbour.*
Down with these branches and these loathsome boughs
Of this unfortunate and fatal pine :
Down with them, Isabella ; rent them up,
And burn the roots from whence the rest is sprung.

I will not leave a root, a stalk, a tree,
A bough, a branch, a blossom, nor a leaf,
No, not an herb within this garden-plot— :
Accursèd complot of my misery !
Fruitless for ever may this garden be,
Barren the earth, and blissless whosoe'er
Imagines not to keep it unmanur'd !
An eastern wind, commix'd with noisome airs,
Shall blast the plants and the young saplings ;
The earth with serpents shall be pesterèd,
And passengers, for fear to be infect,
Shall stand aloof, and, looking at it, tell :
" There, murder'd, died the son of Isabel."
Ay, here he died, and here I him embrace :
See, where his ghost solicits, with his wounds,
Revenge on her that should revenge his death.
Hieronimo, make haste to see thy son ;
For sorrow and despair hath cited me
To hear Horatio plead with Rhadamanth :
Make haste, Hieronimo, to hold excus'd
Thy negligence in pursuit of their deaths
Whose hateful wrath bereav'd him of his breath.—
Ah, nay, thou dost delay their deaths,
Forgiv'st the murd'rers of thy noble son,
And none but I bestir me—to no end !
And as I curse this tree from further fruit,
So shall my womb be cursèd for his sake ;
And with this weapon will I wound the breast,
The hapless breast, that gave Horatio suck. [*She stabs herself.*

SCENE III

Enter HIERONIMO ; *he knocks up the curtain. Enter the* DUKE OF CASTILE.

CAST. : How now, Hieronimo, where's your fellows.
That you take all this pain ?
HIER. : O sir, it is for the author's credit,
To look that all things may go well.
But, good my lord, let me entreat your grace,
To give the king the copy of the play :
This is the argument of what we show.
CAST. : I will, Hieronimo.
HIER. : One thing more, my good lord.
CAST. : What's that ?
HIER. : Let me entreat your grace
That, when the train are pass'd into the gallery,
You would vouchsafe to throw me down the key.
CAST. : I will, Hieronimo. [*Exit* CASTILE.
HIER. : What, are you ready, Balthazar ?
Bring a chair and a cushion for the king.

Enter BALTHAZAR, *with a chair.*

Well done, Balthazar ! hang up the title :
Our scene is Rhodes ;—what, is your beard on ?
BAL. : Half on ; the other is in my hand.

HIER. : Despatch for shame; are you so long ? [*Exit* BALTHAZAR.
Bethink thyself, Hieronimo,
Recall thy wits, recount thy former wrongs
Thou hast receiv'd by murder of thy son,
And lastly—not least !—how Isabel,
Once his mother and thy dearest wife,
All woe-begone for him, hath slain herself.
Behoves thee then, Hieronimo, to be reveng'd !
The plot is laid of dire revenge :
On, then, Hieronimo, pursue revenge ;
For nothing wants but acting of revenge ! *Exit* HIERONIMO.

SCENE IV

Enter SPANISH KING, VICEROY, *the* DUKE OF CASTILE, *and their train.*

KING : Now, Viceroy, shall we see the tragedy
Of Soliman, the Turkish emperor,
Perform'd—of pleasure—by your son the prince,
My nephew Don Lorenzo, and my niece.
VIC. : Who ? Bellimperia ?
KING : Ay, and Hieronimo, our marshal,
At whose request they deign to do't themselves :
These be our pastimes in the court of Spain.
Here, brother, you shall be the bookkeeper :
This is the argument of that they show.
[*He giveth him a book.*
Gentlemen, this play of HIERONIMO, *in sundry languages, was thought good to be set down in English more largely, for the easier understanding to every public reader.*

Enter BALTHAZAR, BELLIMPERIA, *and* HIERONIMO.

BAL. : *Bashaw, that Rhodes is ours ; yield heav'ns the honour,*
And holy Mahomet, our sacred prophet !
And be thou grac'd with every excellence
That Soliman can give, or thou desire.
But thy desert in conquering Rhodes is less
Than in reserving this fair Christian nymph,
Perseda, blissful lamp of excellence,
Whose eyes compel, like powerful adamant,
The warlike heart of Soliman to wait.
KING : See, Viceroy, that is Balthazar, your son,
That represents the emperor Soliman :
How well he acts his amorous passion !
VIC. : Ay, Bellimperia hath taught him that.
CAST. : That's because his mind runs all on Bellimperia.
HIER. : *Whatever joy earth yields, betide your majesty.*
BAL. : *Earth yields no joy without Perseda's love.*
HIER. : *Let then Perseda on your grace attend.*
BAL. : *She shall not wait on me, but I on her :*
Drawn by the influence of her lights, I yield.
But let my friend, the Rhodian knight, come forth,
Erasto, dearer than my life to me,
That he may see Perseda, my belov'd.
Enter ERASTO.
KING : Here comes Lorenzo : look upon the plot,
And tell me, brother, what part plays he ?

BEL. : *Ah, my Erasto, welcome to Perseda.*
LOR. : *Thrice happy is Erasto that thou liv'st ;*
Rhodes' loss is nothing to Erasto's joy :
Sith his Perseda lives, his life survives.
BAL. : *Ah, bashaw, here is love between Erasto*
And fair Perseda, sovereign of my soul.
HIER. : *Remove Erasto, mighty Soliman,*
And then Perseda will be quickly won.
BAL. : *Erasto is my friend ; and while he lives,*
Perseda never will remove her love.
HIER. : *Let not Erasto live to grieve great Soliman.*
BAL. : *Dear is Erasto in our princely eye.*
HIER. : *But if he be your rival, let him die.*
BAL. : *Why, let him die !—so love commandeth me.*
Yet grieve I that Erasto should so die.
HIER. : *Erasto, Soliman saluteth thee,*
And lets thee wit by me his highness' will,
Which is, thou shouldst be thus employ'd. [Stabs him.
BEL. : *Ay me !*
Erasto ! see, Soliman, Erasto's slain !
BAL. : *Yet liveth Soliman to comfort thee.*
Fair queen of beauty, let not favour die,
But with a gracious eye behold his grief,
That with Perseda's beauty is increas'd,
If by Perseda his grief be not releas'd.
BEL. : *Tyrant, desist soliciting vain suits ;*
Relentless are mine ears to thy laments,
As thy butcher is pitiless and base,
Which seiz'd on my Erasto, harmless knight.
Yet by thy power thou thinkest to command,
And to thy power Perseda doth obey :
But, were she able, thus she would revenge
Thy treacheries on thee, ignoble prince : [Stabs him.
And on herself she would be thus reveng'd. [Stabs herself.
KING : Well said !—Old marshal, this was bravely done !
HIER. : But Bellimperia plays Perseda well !
VIC. : Were this in earnest, Bellimperia.
You would be better to my son than so.
KING : But now what follows for Hieronimo ?
HIER. : Marry, this follows for Hieronimo :
Here break we off our sundry languages,
And thus conclude I in our vulgar tongue.
Haply you think—but bootless are your thoughts—
That this is fabulously counterfeit,
And that we do as all tragedians do :
To die to-day (for fashioning our scene)
The death of Ajax or some Roman peer,
And in a minute starting up again,
Revive to please to-morrow's audience.
No, princes ; know I am Hieronimo,
The hopeless father of a hapless son,
Whose tongue is tun'd to tell his latest tale,
Not to excuse gross errors in the play.

I see, your looks urge instance of these words ;
Behold the reason urging me to this :

[Shows his dead son.

See here my show, look on this spectacle,
Here lay my hope, and here my hope hath end ;
Here lay my heart, and here my heart was slain :
Here lay my treasure, here my treasure lost ;
Here lay my bliss, and here my bliss bereft :
But hope, heart, treasure, joy, and bliss,
All fled, fail'd, died, yea, all decay'd with this.
From forth these wounds came breath that gave me life ;
They murder'd me that made these fatal marks.
The cause was love, whence grew this mortal hate ;
The hate : Lorenzo and young Balthazar ;
The love : my son to Bellimperia.
But night, the cov'rer of accursèd crimes,
With pitchy silence hush'd these traitors' harms,
And lent them leave, for they had sorted leisure
To take advantage in my garden-plot
Upon my son, my dear Horatio :
There merciless they butcher'd up my boy,
In black, dark night, to pale, dim, cruel death.
He shrieks : I heard (and yet, methinks, I hear)
His dismal outcry echo in the air.
With soonest speed I hasted to the noise,
Where hanging on a tree I found my son,
Through-girt with wounds, and slaughter'd as you see
And griev'd I, think you, at this spectacle ?
Speak, Portuguese, whose loss resembles mine :
If thou canst weep upon thy Balthazar,
'Tis like I wail'd for my Horatio.
And you, my lord, whose reconcilèd son
March'd in a net, and thought himself unseen,
And rated me for brainsick lunacy,
With " God amend that mad Hieronimo ! "—
How can you brook our play's catastrophe ?
And here behold this bloody handkercher,
Which at Horatio's death I weeping dipp'd
Within the river of his bleeding wounds :
It as propitious, see, I have reserv'd,
And never hath it left my bloody heart,
Soliciting remembrance of my vow
With these, O, these accursèd murderers :
Which now perform'd my heart is satisfied.
And to this end the bashaw I became
That might revenge me on Lorenzo's life,
Who therefore was appointed to the part,
And was to represent the knight of Rhodes,
That I might kill him more conveniently.
So, Viceroy, was this Balthazar, thy son,
That Soliman which Bellimperia,
In person of Perseda, murderèd :
Solely appointed to that tragic part
That she might slay him that offended her.

Poor Bellimperia miss'd her part in this :
For though the story saith she should have died,
Yet I of kindness, and of care to her,
Did otherwise determine of her end ;
But love of him whom they did hate too much
Did urge her resolution to be such.—
And, princes, now behold Hieronimo,
Author and actor in this tragedy,
Bearing his latest fortune in his fist ;
And will as resolute conclude his part,
As any of the actors gone before.
And, gentles, thus I end my play ;
Urge no more words : I have no more to say.
[*He runs to hang himself.*

KING : O hearken, Viceroy ! Hold, Hieronimo !
Brother, my nephew and thy son are slain !

VIC. : We are betray'd ; my Balthazar is slain !
Break ope the doors ; run, save Hieronimo.
[*They break in and hold* HIERONIMO.
Hieronimo,
Do but inform the king of these events ;
Upon mine honour, thou shalt have no harm.

HIER. : Viceroy, I will not trust thee with my life,
Which I this day have offer'd to my son.
Accursèd wretch !
Why stay'st thou him that was resolv'd to die ?

KING : Speak, traitor ! damnèd, bloody murd'rer, speak !
For now I have thee, I will make thee speak.
Why hast thou done this undeserving deed ?

VIC. : Why hast thou murderèd my Balthazar ?

CAST. : Why hast thou butcher'd both my children thus ?

HIER. : [*But are you sure they are dead ?*

CAST. : *Ay, slave, too sure.*

HIER. : *What, and yours too ?*

VIC. : *Ay, all are dead ; not one of them survive.*

HIER. : *Nay, then I care not ; come, and we shall be friends ;*
Let us lay our heads together:
See, here's a goodly noose will hold them all.

VIC. : *O damnèd devil, how secure he is !*

HIER. : *Secure ? why, dost thou wonder at it ?*
I tell thee, Viceroy, this day I have seen revenge,
And in that sight am grown a prouder monarch,
Than ever sat under the crown of Spain.
Had I as many lives as there be stars,
As many heav'ns to go to, as those lives,
I'd give them all, ay, and my soul to boot,
But I would see thee ride in this red pool.]
O, good words !
As dear to me was my Horatio,
As yours, or yours, or yours, my lord to you.
My guiltless son was by Lorenzo slain,
And by Lorenzo and that Balthazar
Am I at last revengèd thoroughly,

Upon whose souls may heav'ns be yet aveng'd
With greater far than these afflictions.

CAST. : But who were thy confederates in this ?

VIC. : That was thy daughter Bellimperia ;
For by her hand my Balthazar was slain :
I saw her stab him.

KING : Why speak'st thou not ?

HIER. : What lesser liberty can kings afford
Than harmless silence ? then afford it me.
Sufficeth, I may not, nor I will not tell thee.

KING : Fetch forth the tortures : traitor as thou art,
I'll make thee tell.

HIER. : Indeed,
Thou may'st torment me, as his wretched son
Hath done in murd'ring my Horatio :
But never shalt thou force me to reveal
The thing which I have vow'd inviolate.
And therefore, in despite of all thy threats,
Pleas'd with their deaths, and eas'd with their revenge,
First take my tongue, and afterwards my heart.

[*He bites out his tongue.*

KING : O monstrous resolution of a wretch !
See, Viceroy, he hath bitten forth his tongue,
Rather than to reveal what we requir'd.

CAST. : Yet can he write.

KING : And if in this he satisfy us not,
We will devise th' extremest kind of death
That ever was invented for a wretch.

[*Then he makes signs for a knife to mend his pen.*

CAST. : O, he would have a knife to mend his pen.

VIC. : Here, and advise thee that thou write the troth.—
Look to my brother ! save Hieronimo !

[*He with a knife stabs the duke and himself.*

KING : What age hath ever heard such monstrous deeds ?
My brother, and the whole succeeding hope
That Spain expected after my decease !—
Go, bear his body hence, that we may mourn
The loss of our belovèd brother's death— :
That he may be entomb'd !—Whate'er befall,
I am the next, the nearest, last of all.

VIC. : And thou, Don Pedro, do the like for us :
Take up our hapless son, untimely slain ;
Set me with him, and he with woeful me,
Upon the main-mast of a ship unmann'd,
And let the wind and tide haul me along
To Scylla's barking and untamèd gulf,
Or to the loathsome pool of Acheron,
To weep my want for my sweet Balthazar :
Spain hath no refuge for a Portingal.

[*The trumpets sound a dead march : the* KING OF SPAIN *mourning after his brother's body, and the* KING OF PORTINGAL *bearing the body of his son.*

SCENE V

Enter GHOST *and* REVENGE.

GHOST : Ay, now my hopes have end in their effects,
When blood and sorrow finish my desires :
Horatio murder'd in his father's bower ;
Vild Serberine by Pedringano slain ;
False Pedringano hang'd by quaint device ;
Fair Isabella by herself misdone ;
Prince Balthazar by Bellimperia stabb'd ;
The Duke of Castile and his wicked son.
Both done to death by old Hieronimo ;
My Bellimperia fall'n, as Dido fell,
And good Hieronimo slain by himself :
Ay, these were spectacles to please my soul !—
Now will I beg at lovely Proserpine
That, by the virtue of her princely doom,
I may consort my friends in pleasing sort,
And on my foes work just and sharp revenge.
I'll lead my friend Horatio through those fields,
Where never-dying wars are still inur'd ;
I'll lead fair Isabella to that train,
Where pity weeps, but never feeleth pain ;
I'll lead my Bellimperia to those joys,
That vestal virgins and fair queens possess ;
I'll lead Hieronimo where Orpheus plays,
Adding sweet pleasure to eternal days.
But say, Revenge—for thou must help, or none—
Against the rest how shall my hate be shown ?
REV. : This hand shall hale them down to deepest hell,
Where none but Furies, bugs and tortures dwell.
GHOST : Then, sweet Revenge, do this at my request :
Let me be judge, and doom them to unrest,
Let loose poor Tityus from the vulture's gripe,
And let Don Cyprian supply his room ;
Place Don Lorenzo on Ixion's wheel,
And let the lover's endless pains surcease
(Juno forgets old wrath, and grants him ease) ;
Hang Balthazar about Chimæra's neck,
And let him there bewail his bloody love,
Repining at our joys that are above ;
Let Serberine go roll the fatal stone,
And take from Sisyphus his endless moan ;
False Pedringano, for his treachery,
Let him be dragg'd through boiling Acheron,
And there live, dying still in endless flames.
Blasheming gods and all their holy names.
REV. : Then haste we down to meet thy friends and foes :
To place thy friends in ease, the rest in woes ;
For here though death hath end their misery,
I'll there begin their endless tragedy. [*Exeunt.*

c. 1592

THE OLD WIVES' TALE

(By GEORGE PEELE)

Perhaps the outstanding characteristic of Elizabethan drama is the freedom and variety of the feast. The University wits provide the *hors d'œuvre*. Here is an unconventional extravaganza—the contribution of a man who does not know which way to turn for *embarras de richesses*. It is alive with high spirits and humour and folk lore and romance and satire and realism—and, above all, self-consciousness. *The Old Wives' Tale* is essentially a young man's play.

Like the two Marlowe plays that follow in this volume, it reads best, as it was played, without any formal division into acts and scenes. The dialogue sufficiently indicates imagined changes of scene. The appeal is to a childlike mind that will not brook a tedious explanation of the obvious, still less an interval, whether for refreshments or other irrelevancy.

Its author, George Peele (*c.* 1558—before 1598), was born in Devonshire, educated at Christ's Hospital, London, and at Christ Church College, Oxford, graduating M.A. in 1579. Perhaps he never quite lived down the undergraduate. His propensity for ragging, becoming proverbial, inspired a pamphlet, *The Merrie Jests of George Peele*, in the manner of our Sunday journalism —probably as veracious. Of Peele's other plays, *David and the Fair Bathsheba* (1588) is biblical-sensational and marks the remoteness of the Mystery, of which, in a sacred sense, there is no trace ; *The Arraignment of Paris* (1584) is pastoral and obscurely satirical ; and *Edward I* (1590) is a pretty good history. Peele's death, unlike his jests, was unrecorded.

Milton derived the plot for his " Comus " from *The Old Wives' Tale*.

THE OLD WIVES' TALE

Characters

SACRAPANT	DELIA, *sister to Calypha and Thelea*
FIRST BROTHER, *named* CALYPHA	VENELIA, *betrothed to Erestus*
SECOND BROTHER, *named* THELEA	ZANTIPPA, CELANTA, *daughters to Lampriscus*
EUMENIDES	HOSTESS
ERESTUS	
LAMPRISCUS	
HUANEBANGO	
COREBUS	ANTIC
WIGGEN	FROLIC
CHURCHWARDEN	FANTASTIC
SEXTON	CLUNCH, *a smith*
GHOST OF JACK	MADGE, *his wife*
FRIAR, HARVEST-MEN, FURIES, FIDDLERS, *etc.*	

Enter ANTIC, FROLIC, *and* FANTASTIC.

ANT. : How now, fellow Frolic ! what, all amort ?[1] doth this sadness become thy madness ? What though we have lost our way in the woods ? yet never hang

[1] More properly *alamort*, *i.e.* dejected.

e head as though thou hadst no hope to live till to-morrow ; for Fantastic
nd I will warrant thy life to-night for twenty in the hundred.
. : Antic, and Fantastic, as I am frolic franion,[1] never in all my life was I so
ead slain. What, to lose our way in the wood, without either fire or candle,
uncomfortable ? *O cælum ! O terra ! O maria !* O Neptune !
. : Why makes thou it so strange, seeing Cupid hath led our young master
the fair lady, and she is the only saint that he hath sworn to serve ?
. : What resteth, then, but we commit him to his wench, and each of us
ke his stand up in a tree, and sing out our ill fortune to the tune of "*O
an in desperation*" ?
. : Desperately spoken, fellow Frolic, in the dark : but seeing it falls out
us, let us rehearse the old proverb :

"Three merry men, and three merry men,
And three merry men be we ;
I in the wood, and thou on the ground,
And Jack sleeps in the tree."

. : Hush ! a dog in the wood, or a wooden[2] dog ! O comfortable hearing !
had even as lief the chamberlain of the White Horse had called me up to
ed.
. : Either hath this trotting cur gone out of his circuit, or else are we near
me village, which should not be far off, for I perceive the glimmering of a
low-worm, a candle, or a cat's eye, my life for a halfpenny !

Enter CLUNCH *with a lantern and candle.*

n the name of my own father, be thou ox or ass that appearest, tell us what
ou art.
UNCH : What am I ! why, I am Clunch the smith. What are you ? what make
ou in my territories at this time of the night ?
. : What do we make, dost thou ask ? why, we make faces for fear ; such as
thy mortal eyes could behold, would make thee water the long seams of
by side slops,[3] smith.
. : And, in faith, sir, unless your hospitality do relieve us, we are like to
vander, with a sorrowful heigh-ho, among the owlets and hobgoblins of the
orest. Good Vulcan, for Cupid's sake that hath cozened us all, befriend us
s thou mayst ; and command us howsoever, wheresoever, whensoever, in
vhatsoever, for ever and ever.
UNCH : Well, masters, it seems to me you have lost your way in the wood :
n consideration whereof, if you will go with Clunch to his cottage, you
hall have house-room and a good fire to sit by, although we have no bedding
o put you in.
L : O blessed smith, O bountiful Clunch !
UNCH : For your further entertainment, it shall be as it may be, so and so.
[*A dog barks within.*
Hark ![4] this is Ball my dog, that bids you all welcome in his own language :
ome, take heed for stumbling on the threshold.—Open door, Madge ; take
n guests.

Enter MADGE.

DGE : Welcome, Clunch, and good fellows all, that come with my good-
nan : for my good-man's sake, come on, sit down ; here is a piece of cheese,
nd a pudding of my own making.

[1] *i.e.* idle fellow. [2] *i.e.* mad. [3] *i.e.* long wide breeches or trousers.
[4] Here the audience were to suppose a change of scene—that the stage now represented the
th's cottage.

ANT. : Thanks, gammer : a good example for the wives of our town.

FRO. : Gammer, thou and thy good-man sit lovingly together ; we come to chat, and not to eat.

CLUNCH : Well, masters, if you will eat nothing, take away. Come, what do we to pass away the time ? Lay a crab in the fire to roast for lamb's-wool.[1] What, shall we have a game at trump or ruff to drive away the time ? how say you ?

FAN. : This smith leads a life as merry as a king with Madge his wife. Sirrah Frolic, I am sure thou art not without some round or other : no doubt but Clunch can bear his part.

FRO. : Else think you me ill brought up: so set to it when you will.

[*They sing*

SONG.

Whenas the rye reach to the chin,
And chopcherry, chopcherry ripe within,
Strawberries swimming in the cream,
And school-boys playing in the stream ;
Then, O, then, O, then, O, my true-love said,
Till that time come again
She could not live a maid.

ANT. : This sport does well ; but methinks, gammer, a merry winter's tale would drive away the time trimly : come, I am sure you are not without a score.

FAN. : I'faith, gammer, a tale of an hour long were as good as an hour's sleep.

FRO. : Look you, gammer, of the giant and the king's daughter, and I know not what : I have seen the day, when I was a little one, you might have drawn me a mile after you with such a discourse.

MADGE : Well, since you be so importunate, my good-man shall fill the pot and get him to bed ; they that ply their work must keep good hours : one of you go lie with him ; he is a clean-skinned man I tell you, without either spavin or wind-gall : so I am content to drive away the time with an old wives winter's tale.

FAN. : No better hay in Devonshire ; o' my word, gammer, I'll be one of your audience.

FRO. : And I another, that's flat.

ANT. : Then must I to bed with the good-man.—*Bona nox*, gammer.—Good night, Frolic.

CLUNCH : Come on, my lad, thou shalt take thy unnatural rest with me.

[*Exit with* ANTIC

FRO. : Yet this vantage shall we have of them in the morning, to be ready at the sight thereof extempore.

MADGE : Now this bargain, my masters, must I make with you, that you will say hum and ha to my tale, so shall I know you are awake.

BOTH : Content, gammer, that will we do.

MADGE : Once upon a time, there was a king, or a lord, or a duke, that had a fair daughter, the fairest that ever was ; as white as snow and as red as blood : and once upon a time his daughter was stolen away : and he sent all his men to seek out his daughter ; and he sent so long, that he sent all his men out of his land.

FRO. : Who drest his dinner, then ?

MADGE : Nay, either hear my tale, or kiss my tail.

FAN. : Well said ! on with your tale, gammer.

[1] A drink made of strong ale and the pulp of roasted crab-apples.

GE : O Lord, I quite forgot ! there was a conjurer, and this conjurer could
anything, and he turned himself into a great dragon, and carried the
ng's daughter away in his mouth to a castle that he made of stone ; and
ere he kept her I know not how long, till at last all the king's men went out
long that her two brothers went to seek her. O, I forget ! she (he, I would
,) turned a proper[1] young man to a bear in the night, and a man in the day,
d keeps by a cross that parts three several ways ; and he made his lady run
ad,—Gods me bones, who comes here ?

Enter the TWO BROTHERS.

: Soft, gammer, here some come to tell your tale for you.
: Let them alone ; let us hear what they will say.
T BRO. : Upon these chalky cliffs of Albion
e are arrivèd now with tedious toil ;
nd compassing the wide world round about,
seek our sister, to seek fair Delia forth,
t cannot we so much as hear of her.
ND BRO. : O fortune cruel, cruel and unkind !
nkind in that we cannot find our sister,
ur sister, hapless in her cruel chance.—
ft ! who have we here ?

Enter ERESTUS *at the Cross, stooping to gather.*

T BRO. : Now, father, God be your speed ! what do you gather there ?
T. : Hips and haws, and sticks and straws, and things that I gather on the
ound, my son.
T BRO. : Hips and haws, and sticks and straws ! why, is that all your food,
her ?
T. : Yea, son.
ND BRO. : Father, here is an alms-penny for me ; and if I speed in that I
for, I will give thee as good a gown of grey as ever thou didst wear.
T BRO. : And, father, here is another alms-penny for me ; and if I speed in
y journey, I will give thee a palmer's staff of ivory, and a scallop-shell of
aten gold.
T. : Was she fair ?
ND BRO. : Ay, the fairest for white, and the purest for red, as the blood of
e deer, or the driven snow.
T. : Then hark well, and mark well, my old spell :—
not afraid of every stranger ;
art not aside at every danger ;
ings that seem are not the same ;
ow a blast at every flame ;
r when one flame of fire goes out,
en come your wishes well about :
any ask who told you this good,
y, the white bear of England's wood.
T BRO. : Brother, heard you not what the old man said ?
not afraid of every stranger ;
art not aside for every danger ;
ings that seem are not the same ;
ow a blast at every flame ;
or when one flame of fire goes out,
en come your wishes well about :]

[1] *i.e.* handsome.

If any ask who told you this good,
Say, the white bear of England's wood.

SECOND BRO. : Well, if this do us any good,
Well fare the white bear of England's wood !

[*Exeunt the* TWO BROTHERS.

EREST. : Now sit thee here, and tell a heavy tale,
Sad in thy mood, and sober in thy cheer ;
Here sit thee now, and to thyself relate
The hard mishap of thy most wretched state.
In Thessaly I liv'd in sweet content,
Until that fortune wrought my overthrow :
For there I wedded was unto a dame,
That liv'd in honour, virtue, love, and fame.
But Sacrapant, that cursèd sorcerer,
Being besotted with my beauteous love,
My dearest love, my true betrothèd wife,
Did seek the means to rid me of my life.
But worse than this, he with his 'chanting spells
Did turn me straight unto an ugly bear ;
And when the sun doth settle in the west,
Then I begin to don my ugly hide :
And all the day I sit, as now you see,
And speak in riddles, all inspir'd with rage,
Seeming an old and miserable man,
And yet I am in April of my age.

Enter VENELIA *mad ; and goes in again.*

See where Venelia, my betrothèd love,
Runs madding, all enrag'd, about the woods,
All by his cursèd and enchanting spells.—
But here comes Lampriscus, my discontented neighbour.

Enter LAMPRISCUS *with a pot of honey.*

How now, neighbour ! you look toward the ground as well as I : you muse on something.

LAMP. : Neighbour, on nothing but on the matter I so often moved to you : if you do anything for charity, help me ; if for neighbourhood or brotherhood, help me : never was one so cumbered as is poor Lampriscus ; and to begin, I pray receive this pot of honey, to mend your fare.

EREST. : Thanks, neighbour, set it down ; honey is always welcome to the bear. And now, neighbour, let me hear the cause of your coming.

LAMP. : I am, as you know, neighbour, a man unmarried, and lived so unquietly with my two wives, that I keep every year holy the day wherein I buried them both : the first was on Saint Andrew's day, the other on Saint Luke's.

EREST. : And now, neighbour, you of this country say, your custom is out. But on with your tale, neighbour.

LAMP. : By my first wife, whose tongue wearied me alive, and sounded in my ears like the clapper of a great bell, whose talk was a continual torment to all that dwelt by her or lived nigh her, you have heard me say I had a handsome daughter.

EREST. : True, neighbour.

MP. : She it is that afflicts me with her continual clamours, and hangs on ne like a bur : poor she is, and proud she is ; as poor as a sheep new-shorn, nd as proud of her hopes as a peacock of her tail well-grown.

EST. : Well said, Lampriscus ! you speak it like an Englishman.

MP. : As curst as a wasp, and as froward as a child new-taken from the nother's teat ; she is to my age, as smoke to the eyes, or as vinegar to the eeth.

EST. : Holily praised, neighbour. As much for the next.

MP. : By my other wife I had a daughter so hard-favoured, so foul, and ill-aced, that I think a grove full of golden trees, and the leaves of rubies and iamonds, would not be a dowry answerable to her deformity.

EST. : Well, neighbour, now you have spoke, hear me speak : send them to he well for the water of life ; there shall they find their fortunes unlooked for. Neighbour, farewell.

MP. : Farewell, and a thousand. [*Exit* ERESTUS.] And now goeth poor Lampriscus to put in execution this excellent counsel. [*Exit.*

D. : Why, this goes round without a fiddling-stick : but, do you hear, ammer, was this the man that was a bear in the night and a man in the day ?

DGE : Ay, this is he ; and this man that came to him was a beggar, and lwelt upon a green. But soft ! who come here ? O, these are the harvest-men ; en to one they sing a song of mowing.

Enter the HARVEST-MEN *a-singing, with this song double repeated.*

All ye that lovely lovers be,
Pray you for me :
Lo, here we come a-sowing, a-sowing,
And sow sweet fruits of love ;
In your sweet hearts well may it prove !

[*Exeunt.*

Enter HUANEBANGO *with his two-hand sword, and* COREBUS.

N. : Gammer, what is he ?

DGE : O, this is one that is going to the conjurer : let him alone, hear what e says.

AN. : Now, by Mars and Mercury, Jupiter and Janus, Sol and Saturnus, Venus and Vesta, Pallas and Proserpina, and by the honour of my house, Polimackeroeplacidus, it is a wonder to see what this love will make silly ellows adventure, even in the wane of their wits and infancy of their discre-ion. Alas, my friend ! what fortune calls thee forth to seek thy fortune among razen gates, enchanted towers, fire and brimstone, thunder and lightning ? Her] beauty, I tell thee, is peerless, and she precious whom thou affectest. Do off these desires, good countryman : good friend, run away from thyself ; nd, so soon as thou canst, forget her, whom none must inherit but he that an monsters tame, labours achieve, riddles absolve, loose enchantments, nurder magic, and kill conjuring,—and that is the great and mighty Huane-bango.

R. : Hark you, sir, hark you. First know I have here the flurting feather, and ave given the parish the start for the long stock[1] : now, sir, if it be no more but running through a little lightning and thunder, and "riddle me, riddle me what's this?" I'll have the wench from the conjurer, if he were ten conjurers.

[1] *i.e.* sword.

HUAN. : I have abandoned the court and honourable company, to do my devoir against this sore sorcerer and mighty magician : if this lady be so fair as she is said to be, she is mine, she is mine ; *meus, mea, meum, in contemptum omnium grammaticorum.*

COR. : *O falsum Latinum !*
The fair maid is *minum,*
Cum apurtinantibus gibletis and all.

HUAN. : If she be mine, as I assure myself the heavens will do somewhat to reward my worthiness, she shall be allied to none of the meanest gods, but be invested in the most famous stock of Huanebango,—Polimackeroeplacidus my grandfather, my father Pergopolineo, my mother Dionora de Sardinia, famously descended.

COR. : Do you hear, sir ? had not you a cousin that was called Gusteceridis ?

HUAN. : Indeed, I had a cousin that sometimes followed the court infortunately, and his name Bustegusteceridis.

COR. : O Lord, I know him well ! he is the knight of the neat's-feet.

HUAN. : O, he loved no capon better ! he hath oftentimes deceived his boy of his dinner ; that was his fault, good Bustegusteceridis.

COR. : Come, shall we go along ?

Enter EREST US *at the Cross.*

Soft ! here is an old man at the cross ; let us ask him the way thither.—Ho, you gaffer ! I pray you tell where the wise man the conjurer dwells.

HUAN. : Where that earthly goddess keepeth her abode, the commander of my thoughts, and fair mistress of my heart.

EREST. : Fair enough, and far enough from thy fingering, son.

HUAN. : I will follow my fortune after mine own fancy, and do according to mine own discretion.

EREST. : Yet give something to an old man before you go.

HUAN. : Father, methinks a piece of this cake might serve your turn.

EREST. : Yea, son.

HUAN. : Huanebango giveth no cakes for alms : ask of them that give gifts for poor beggars.—Fair lady, if thou wert once shrined in this bosom, I would buckler thee haratantara. [*Exit.*

COR. : Father, do you see this man ? you little think he'll run a mile or two for such a cake, or pass for[1] a pudding. I tell you, father, he has kept such a begging of me for a piece of this cake ! Whoo ! he comes upon me with " a superfantial substance, and the foison[2] of the earth," that I know not what he means. If he came to me thus, and said, " My friend Corebus," or so, why I could spare him a piece with all my heart ; but when he tells me how God hath enriched me above other fellows with a cake, why, he makes me blind and deaf at once. Yet, father, here is a piece of cake for you, as hard as the world goes. [*Gives cake.*

EREST. : Thanks, son, but list to me ;
He shall be deaf when thou shalt not see.
Farewell, my son : things may so hit,
Thou mayest have wealth to mend thy wit.

COR. : Farewell, father, farewell : for I must make haste after my two-hand sword that is gone before. [*Exeunt severally.*

Enter SACRAPANT *in his study.*

1 *i.e.* care for. 2 *i.e.* plenty.

AC. : The day is clear, the welkin bright and grey,
The lark is merry and records[1] her notes ;
Each thing rejoiceth underneath the sky,
But only I, whom heaven hath in hate,
Wretched and miserable Sacrapant.
In Thessaly was I born and brought up ;
My mother Meroe hight,[2] a famous witch,
And by her cunning I of her did learn
To change and alter shapes of mortal men.
There did I turn myself into a dragon,
And stole away the daughter to the king,
Fair Delia, the mistress of my heart ;
And brought her hither to revive the man,
That seemeth young and pleasant to behold,
And yet is agèd, crookèd, weak, and numb.
Thus by enchanting spells I do deceive
Those that behold and look upon my face ;
But well may I bid youthful years adieu.
See where she comes from whence my sorrows grow !

Enter DELIA *with a pot in her hand.*

How now, fair Delia ! where have you been ?
EL. : At the foot of the rock for running water, and gathering roots for your dinner, sir.
AC. : Ah, Delia,
Fairer art thou than the running water,
Yet harder far than steel or adamant !
EL. : Will it please you to sit down, sir ?
AC. : Ay, Delia, sit and ask me what thou wilt,
Thou shalt have it brought into thy lap.
EL. : Then, I pray you, sir, let me have the best meat from the King of England's table, and the best wine in all France, brought in by the veriest knave in all Spain.
AC. : Delia, I am glad to see you so pleasant :
Well, sit thee down.—
Spread table, spread,
Meat, drink, and bread,
Ever may I have
What I ever crave,
When I am spread,
Meat for my black cock,
And meat for my red.

Enter a FRIAR *with a chine of beef and a pot of wine.*

Here, Delia, will ye fall to ?
EL. : Is this the best meat in England ?
AC. : Yea.
EL. : What is it ?
AC. : A chine of English beef, meat for a king and a king's followers.
EL. : Is this the best wine in France ?

[1] *i.e.* sings, tunes. [2] *i.e.* called.

SAC. : Yea.
DEL. : What wine is it ?
SAC. : A cup of neat wine of Orleans, that never came near the brewers in England.
DEL. : Is this the veriest knave in all Spain ?
SAC. : Yea.
DEL. : What, is he a friar ?
SAC. : Yea, a friar indefinite, and a knave infinite.
DEL. : Then, I pray ye, Sir Friar, tell me before you go, which is the most greediest Englishman ?
FRI. : The miserable and most covetous usurer.
SAC. : Hold thee there, friar. [*Exit* FRIAR.] But, soft !
Who have we here ? Delia, away, be gone !

Enter the TWO BROTHERS.

Delia, away ! for beset are we.—
But heaven or hell shall rescue her for me.
[*Exeunt* DELIA *and* SACRAPANT.
FIRST BRO. : Brother, was not that Delia did appear,
Or was it but her shadow that was here ?
SECOND BRO. : Sister, where art thou ? Delia, come again !
He calls, that of thy absence doth complain.—
Call out, Calypha, that she may hear,
And cry aloud, for Delia is near.
ECHO : Near.
FIRST BRO. : Near ! O, where ? hast thou any tidings ?
ECHO : Tidings.
SECOND BRO. : Which way is Delia, then ? or that, or this ?
ECHO : This.
FIRST BRO. : And may we safely come where Delia is ?
ECHO : Yes.
SECOND BRO. : Brother, remember you the white bear of England's wood ?
" Start not aside for every danger,
Be not afeard of every stranger ;
Things that seem are not the same."
FIRST BRO. : Brother,
Why do we not, then, courageously enter ?
SECOND BRO. : Then, brother, draw thy sword and follow me.

Re-enter SACRAPANT : *it lightens and thunders ; the* SECOND BROTHER *falls down.*

FIRST BRO. : What, brother, dost thou fall ?
SAC. : Ay, and thou too, Calypha.
[*The* FIRST BROTHER *falls down.*
Adeste, dæmones !

Enter TWO FURIES.

Away with them :
Go carry them straight to Sacrapanto's cell,
There in despair and torture for to dwell.
[*Exeunt* FURIES *with the* TWO BROTHERS.

These are Thenores' sons of Thessaly,
That come to seek Delia their sister forth :
But, with a potion I to her have given,
My arts have made her to forget herself.

[*Removes a turf, and shows a light in a glass.*

See here the thing which doth prolong my life,
With this enchantment I do anything ;
And till this fade, my skill shall still endure,
And never none shall break this little glass,
But she that's neither wife, widow, nor maid :
Then cheer thyself ; this is thy destiny,
Never to die but by a dead man's hand. [*Exit.*

Enter EUMENIDES.

EUM. : Tell me, Time,
Tell me, just Time, when shall I Delia see ?
When shall I see the loadstar of my life ?
When shall my wandering course end with her sight,
Or I but view my hope, my heart's delight ?

Enter ERESTUS *at the Cross.*

Father, God speed ! if you tell fortunes, I pray, good father, tell me mine.

ERST. : Son, I do see in thy face
Thy blessèd fortune work apace :
I do perceive that thou hast wit ;
Beg of thy fate to govern it,
For wisdom govern'd by advice,
Makes many fortunate and wise.
Bestow thy alms, give more than all,
Till dead men's bones come at thy call.
Farewell, my son : dream of no rest,
Till thou repent that thou didst best. [*Exit.*

EUM. : This man hath left me in a labyrinth :
He biddeth me give more than all,
Till dead men's bones come at my call ;
He biddeth me dream of no rest,
Till I repent that I do best. [*Lies down and sleeps.*

Enter WIGGEN, COREBUS, CHURCHWARDEN, *and* SEXTON.

WIG. : You may be ashamed, you whoreson scald Sexton and Churchwarden, if you had any shame in those shameless faces of yours, to let a poor man lie so long above ground unburied. A rot on you all, that have no more compassion of a good fellow when he is gone !

CHURCH. : What, would you have us to bury him, and to answer it ourselves to the parish ?

SEX. : Parish me no parishes ; pay me my fees, and let the rest run on in the quarter's accounts, and put it down for one of your good deeds, o' God's name ! for I am not one that curiously stands upon merits.

COR. : You whoreson, sodden-headed sheep's-face, shall a good fellow do less service and more honesty to the parish, and will you not, when he is dead, let him have Christmas burial ?

WIG. : Peace, Corebus ! as sure as Jack was Jack, the frolic'st franion amongst you, and I, Wiggen, his sweet sworn brother, Jack shall have his funerals, or some of them shall lie on God's dear earth for it, that's once.

CHURCH. : Wiggen, I hope thou wilt do no more than thou darest answer.

WIG. : Sir, sir, dare or dare not, more or less, answer or not answer, do this, or have this.

SEX. : Help, help, help !

[WIGGEN *sets upon the parish with a pike-staff :* EUMENIDES *awakes and comes to them.*

EUM. : Hold thy hands, good fellow.

COR. : Can you blame him, sir, if he take Jack's part against this shake-rotten parish that will not bury Jack ?

EUM. : Why, what was that Jack ?

COR. : Who, Jack, sir ? who, our Jack, sir ? as good a fellow as ever trod upon neat's-leather.

WIG. : Look you, sir ; he gave fourscore and nineteen mourning gowns to the parish, when he died, and because he would not make them up a full hundred, they would not bury him : was not this good dealing ?

CHURCH. : O Lord, sir, how he lies ! he was not worth a halfpenny, and drunk out every penny ; and now his fellows, his drunken companions, would have us to bury him at the charge of the parish. An we make many such matches, we may pull down the steeple, sell the bells, and thatch the chancel ; he shall lie above ground till he dance a galliard about the church-yard, for Steeven Loach.

WIG. : *Sic argumentaris, Domine* Loach.—An we make many such matches, we may pull down the steeple, sell the bells, and thatch the chancel ? in good time, sir, and hang yourselves in the bell-ropes, when you have done. *Domine, opponens præpono tibi hanc quæstionem*, whether will you have the ground broken or your pates broken first ? for one of them shall be done presently, and to begin mine, I'll seal it upon your coxcomb.

EUM. : Hold thy hands, I pray thee, good fellow : be not too hasty.

COR. : You capon's face, we shall have you turned out of the parish one of these days, with never a tatter to your arse ; then you are in worse taking than Jack.

EUM. : Faith, and he is bad enough. This fellow does but the part of a friend, to seek to bury his friend : how much will bury him ?

WIG. : Faith, about some fifteen or sixteen shillings will bestow him honestly.

SEX. : Ay, even thereabouts, sir.

EUM. : Here, hold it, then : – (*aside*) and I have left me but one poor three halfpence : now do I remember the words the old man spake at the cross, " Bestow all thou hast," and this is all, " till dead men's bones come at thy call " :—here, hold it (*gives money*) ; and so farewell.

WIG. : God, and all good, be with you, sir ! [*Exit* EUMENIDES. Nay, you cormorants, I'll bestow one peal of[1] Jack at mine own proper costs and charges.

COR. : You may thank God the long staff and the bilbo-blade crossed not your coxcomb[s].—Well, we'll to the church-stile and have a pot, and so trill-lill.

[*Exit with* WIGGEN.

CHURCH. } Come, let's go. [*Exeunt.*
SEX. }

FAN. : But, hark you, gammer, methinks this Jack bore a great sway in the parish.

[1] *i.e.* on.

ADGE : O, this Jack was a marvellous fellow ! he was but a poor man, but very well beloved : you shall see anon what this Jack will come to.

Enter the HARVEST-MEN *singing, with women in their hands.*

RO. : Soft ! who have we here ? our amorous harvesters.
AN. : Ay, ay, let us sit still, and let them alone.
Here the HARVEST-MEN *sing, the song doubled.*

Lo, here we come a-reaping, a-reaping,
To reap our harvest-fruit !
And thus we pass the year so long,
And never be we mute.

[*Exeunt the* HARVEST-MEN.

Enter HUANEBANGO.

RO. : Soft ! who have we here ?
ADGE : O, this is a choleric gentleman ! All you that love your lives, keep out of the smell of his two-hand sword : now goes he to the conjurer.
AN. : Methinks the conjurer should put the fool into a juggling-box.
UAN. : Fee, fa, fum,
Here is the Englishman,—
Conquer him that can,—
Come for his lady bright,
To prove himself a knight,
And win her love in fight.

Enter COREBUS.

OR. : Who-haw, Master Bango, are you here? hear you, you had best sit down here, and beg an alms with me.
UAN. : Hence, base cullion ! here is he that commandeth ingress and egress with his weapon, and will enter at his voluntary, whosoever saith no.
OICE : No. [*A flame of fire ; and* HUANEBANGO *falls down.*
ADGE : So with that they kissed, and spoiled the edge of as good a two-hand sword as ever God put life in. Now goes Corebus in, spite of the conjurer.

Enter SACRAPANT *and* TWO FURIES.

AC. : Away with him into the open fields,
To be a ravening prey to crows and kites :
[HUAN. *is carried out by the* TWO FURIES.
And for this villain, let him wander up and down,
In naught but darkness and eternal night.
[*Strikes* COREBUS *blind.*
OR. : Here hast thou slain Huan, a slashing knight,
And robbèd poor Corebus of his sight.
AC. : Hence, villain, hence ! [*Exit* COREBUS.
Now I have unto Delia
Given a potion of forgetfulness,
That, when she comes, she shall not know her brothers.
Lo, where they labour, like to country-slaves,
With spade and mattock, on this enchanted ground !
Now will I call her by another name ;

For never shall she know herself again,
Until that Sacrapant hath breath'd his last.
See where she comes.

Enter DELIA.

Come hither, Delia, take this goad ; here hard
At hand two slaves do work and dig for gold :
Gore them with this, and thou shalt have enough.

[*Gives her a goad.*

DEL. : Good sir, I know not what you mean.

SAC. (*aside*) : She hath forgotten to be Delia,
But not forgot the same she should forget ;
But I will change her name.—
Fair Berecynthia, so this country calls you,
Go ply these strangers, wench ; they dig for gold. [*Exit.*

DEL. : O heavens, how
Am I beholding to this fair young man !
But I must ply these strangers to their work :
See where they come.

Enter the TWO BROTHERS *in their shirts, with spades, digging.*

FIRST BRO. : O brother, see where Delia is !

SECOND BRO. : O Delia,
Happy are we to see thee here !

DEL. : What tell you me of Delia, prating swains ?
I know no Delia, nor know I what you mean.
Ply you your work, or else you're like to smart.

FIRST BRO. : Why, Delia, know'st thou not thy brothers here ?
We come from Thessaly to seek thee forth ;
And thou deceiv'st thyself, for thou art Delia.

DEL. : Yet more of Delia ? then take this, and smart :

[*Pricks them with the goad.*

What, feign you shifts for to defer your labour ?
Work, villains, work ; it is for gold you dig.

SECOND BRO. : Peace, brother, peace : this vile enchanter
Hath ravish'd Delia of her senses clean,
And she forgets that she is Delia.

FIRST BRO. : Leave, cruel thou, to hurt the miserable.—
Dig, brother, dig, for she is hard as steel.

Here they dig, and descry a light in a glass under a little hill.

SECOND BRO. : Stay, brother ; what hast thou descried ?

DEL. : Away, and touch it not ; 'tis something that
My lord hath hidden there. [*Covers the light again.*

Re-enter SACRAPANT.

SAC. : Well said ! thou plyest these pioners well.—
Go get you in, you labouring slaves.

[*Exeunt the* TWO BROTHERS.

Come, Berecynthia, let us in likewise,
And hear the nightingale record her notes. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ZANTIPPA, *to the Well of Life, with a pot in her hand.*

ZAN. : Now for a husband, house, and home : God send a good one or none, I pray God ! My father hath sent me to the well for the water of life, and tells me, if I give fair words, I shall have a husband. But here comes Celanta my sweet sister : I'll stand by and hear what she says. [*Retires.*

Enter CELANTA, *to the Well of Life, with a pot in her hand.*

CEL. : My father hath sent me to the well for water, and he tells me, if I speak fair, I shall have a husband, and none of the worst. Well, though I am black, I am sure all the world will not forsake me ; and, as the old proverb is, though I am black, I am not the devil.

ZAN. (*coming forward*) : Marry-gup with a murren, I know wherefore thou speakest that : but go thy ways home as wise as thou camest, or I'll set thee home with a wanion.

Here she strikes her pitcher against her sister's, and breaks them both, and then exit.

CEL. : I think this be the curstest quean in the world : you see what she is, a little fair, but as proud as the devil, and the veriest vixen that lives upon God's earth. Well, I'll let her alone, and go home, and get another pitcher, and, for all this, get me to the well for water. [*Exit.*

Enter, out of SACRAPANT'S *cell, the* TWO FURIES *carrying* HUANEBANGO : *they lay him by the Well of Life, and then exeunt. Re-enter* ZANTIPPA *with a pitcher to the well.*

ZAN. : Once again for a husband ; and, in faith, Celanta, I have got the start of you ; belike husbands grow by the wellside. Now my father says I must rule my tongue : why, alas, what am I, then ? a woman without a tongue is as a soldier without his weapon : but I'll have my water, and be gone.

Here she offers to dip her pitcher in, and a HEAD *rises in the well.*

HEAD : Gently dip, but not too deep,
For fear you make the golden beard to weep.
Fair maiden, white and red,
Stroke me smooth, and comb my head,
And thou shalt have some cockell-bread.

ZAN. : What is this ?
" Fair maiden, white and red,
Comb me smooth, and stroke my head,
And thou shalt have some cockell-bread " ?
" Cockell " callest thou it, boy ? faith, I'll give you cockell-bread.

She breaks her pitcher upon the HEAD : *then it thunders and lightens ; and* HUANEBANGO, *who is deaf and cannot hear, rises up.*

HUAN. : Philida, philerídos, pamphilida, florida, flortos :
Dub dub-a-dub, bounce, quoth the guns, with a sulphurous huff-snuff :
Wak'd with a wench, pretty peat, pretty love, and my sweet pretty pigsnie,
Just by thy side shall sit surnamèd great Huanebango :
Safe in my arms will I keep thee, threat Mars, or thunder Olympus.

ZAN. (*aside*) : Foh, what greasy groom have we here ? He looks as though he crept out of the backside of the well, and speaks like a drum perished at the west end.

HUAN. : O, that I might,—but I may not, woe to my destiny therefore !—Kiss that I clasp ! but I cannot : tell me, my destiny, wherefore ?

ZAN. (*aside*) : Whoop ! now I have my dream. Did you never hear so great a wonder as this, three blue beans in a blue bladder, rattle, bladder, rattle ?

HUAN. (*aside*) : I'll now set my countenance, and to her in prose ; it may be, this rim-ram-ruff is too rude an encounter.—Let me, fair lady, if you be at leisure, revel with your sweetness, and rail upon that cowardly conjurer, that hath cast me, or congealed me rather, into an unkind sleep, and polluted my carcass.

ZAN. (*aside*) : Laugh, laugh, Zantippa ; thou hast thy fortune, a fool and a husband under one.

HUAN. : Truly, sweet-heart, as I seem, about some twenty years, the very April of mine age.

ZAN. (*aside*) : Why, what a prating ass is this !

HUAN. : Her coral lips, her crimson chin.
Her silver teeth so white within,
Her golden locks, her rolling eye,
Her pretty parts, let them go by,
Heigh-ho, have wounded me,
That I must die this day to see !

ZAN. : By Gogs-bones, thou art a flouting knave : " her coral lips, her crimson chin ! " ka, wilshaw !

HUAN. : True, my own, and my own because mine, and mine because mine, ha, ha ! above a thousand pounds in possibility, and things fitting thy desire in possession.

ZAN. (*aside*) : The sot thinks I ask of his lands. Lob be your comfort, and cuckold be your destiny !—Hear you, sir ; an if you will have us, you had best say so betime.

HUAN. : True, sweet-heart, and will royalise thy progeny with my pedigree.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter EUMENIDES.

EUM. : Wretched Eumenides, still unfortunate,
Envied by fortune and forlorn by fate,
Here pine and die, wretched Eumenides,
Die in the spring, the April of thy age !
Here sit thee down, repent what thou hast done :
I would to God that it were ne'er begun !

Enter the GHOST OF JACK.

G. OF JACK : You are well overtaken, sir.

EUM. : Who's that ?

G. OF JACK : You are heartily well met, sir.

EUM. : Forbear, I say : who is that which pincheth me ?

G. OF JACK : Trusting in God, good Master Eumenides, that you are in so good health as all your friends were at the making hereof,—God give you good morrow, sir ! Lack you not a neat, handsome, and cleanly young lad, about the age of fifteen or sixteen years, that can run by your horse, and, for a need, make your mastership's shoes as black as ink ? how say you, sir ?

EUM. : Alas, pretty lad, I know not how to keep myself, and much less a servant, my pretty boy ; my state is so bad.

G. OF JACK : Content yourself, you shall not be so ill a master but I'll be as bad a servant. Tut, sir, I know you, though you know not me : are not you the man, sir, deny it if you can, sir, that came from a strange place in the land of Catita, where Jack-an-apes flies with his tail in his mouth, to seek out a lady as white as snow and as red as blood ? ha, ha ! have I touched you now ?

EUM. (*aside*) : I think this boy be a spirit.—How knowest thou all this ?

G. OF JACK : Tut, are not you the man, sir, deny it if you can, sir, that gave all the money you had to the burying of a poor man, and but one three half-pence left in your purse ? Content you, sir, I'll serve you, that is flat.

EUM. : Well, my lad, since thou art so impor[tu]nate, I am content to entertain thee, not as a servant, but a copartner in my journey. But whither shall we go ? for I have not any money more than one bare three half-pence.

G. OF JACK : Well, master, content yourself, for if my divination be not out, that shall be spent at the next inn or alehouse we come to ; for, master, I know you are passing hungry : therefore I'll go before and provide dinner until that you come ; no doubt but you'll come fair and softly after.

EUM. : Ay, go before ; I'll follow thee.

G. OF JACK : But do you hear, master ? do you know my name ?

EUM. : No, I promise thee, not yet.

G. OF JACK : Why, I am Jack. [*Exit.*[1]

EUM. : Jack ! why, be it so, then.

Enter the HOSTESS *and* JACK, *setting meat on the table ; and Fiddlers come to play.* EUMENIDES *walks up and down, and will eat no meat.*

HOST. : How say you, sir ? do you please to sit down ?

EUM. : Hostess, I thank you, I have no great stomach.

HOST. : Pray, sir, what is the reason your master is so strange ? doth not this meat please him ?

G. OF JACK : Yes, hostess, but it is my master's fashion to pay before he eats ; therefore, a reckoning, good hostess.

HOST. : Marry, shall you, sir, presently. [*Exit.*

EUM. : Why, Jack, what dost thou mean ? thou knowest I have not any money ; therefore, sweet Jack, tell me what shall I do ?

G. OF JACK : Well, master, look in your purse.

EUM. : Why, faith, it is a folly, for I have no money.

G. OF JACK : Why, look you, master ; do so much for me.

EUM. (*looking into his purse*) : Alas, Jack, my purse is full of money !

JACK : " Alas," master ! does that word belong to this accident ? why, methinks I should have seen you cast away your cloak, and in a bravado dance a galliard round about the chamber : why, master, your man can teach you more wit than this.

Re-enter HOSTESS.

Come, hostess, cheer up my master.

HOST. : You are heartily welcome ; and if it please you to eat of a fat capon, a fairer bird, a finer bird, a sweeter bird, a crisper bird, a neater bird, your worship never eat of.

EUM. : Thanks, my fine, eloquent hostess.

G. OF JACK : But hear you, master, one word by the way : are you content I shall be halves in all you get in your journey ?

[1] After Jack's exit, as there was no change of scenery in Peele's days, the audience were to suppose Eumenides already arrived at the inn.

EUM. : I am, Jack, here is my hand.
G. OF JACK : Enough, master, I ask no more.
EUM. : Come, hostess, receive your money ; and I thank you for my good entertainment. [*Gives money.*
HOST. : You are heartily welcome, sir.
EUM. : Come, Jack, whither go we now ?
G. OF JACK : Marry, master, to the conjurer's presently.
EUM. : Content, Jack.—Hostess, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

Enter COREBUS, *and* CELANTA, *to the Well of Life for water.*

COR. : Come, my duck, come : I have now got a wife : thou art fair, art thou not ?[1]
CEL. : My Corebus, the fairest alive ; make no doubt of that.
COR. : Come, wench, are we almost at the well ?
CEL. : Ay, Corebus, we are almost at the well now. I'll go fetch some water : sit down while I dip my pitcher in.

A HEAD *comes up with ears of corn, which she combs into her lap.*

HEAD : Gently dip, but not too deep,
For fear you make the golden beard to weep.
Fair maiden, white and red,
Comb me smooth, and stroke my head,
And thou shalt have some cockell-bread.

A SECOND HEAD *comes up full of gold, which she combs into her lap.*

SECOND HEAD : Gently dip, but not too deep,
For fear thou make the golden beard to weep.
Fair maid, white and red,
Comb me smooth, and stroke my head,
And every hair a sheaf shall be,
And every sheaf a golden tree.
CEL. : O, see, Corebus, I have combed a great deal of gold into my lap, and a great deal of corn !
COR. : Well said, wench ! now we shall have just enough : God send us coiners to coin our gold. But come, shall we go home, sweetheart ?
CEL. : Nay, come, Corebus, I will lead you.
COR. : So, Corebus, things have well hit ;
Thou hast gotten wealth to mend thy wit. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the GHOST OF JACK *and* EUMENIDES.

G. OF JACK : Come away, master, come.
EUM. : Go along, Jack, I'll follow thee. Jack, they say it is good to go cross-legged, and say prayers backward ; how sayest thou ?
G. OF JACK : Tut, never fear, master ; let me alone. Here sit you still ; speak not a word ; and because you shall not be enticed with his enchanting speeches, with this same wool I'll stop your ears (*Puts wool into the ears of* EUMENIDES) : and so, master, sit still, for I must to the conjurer. [*Exit.*

Enter SACRAPANT.

[1] The reader must not forget that Corebus has been struck blind by Sacrapant.

SAC. : How now ! what man art thou, that sits so sad ?
Why dost thou gaze upon these stately trees
Without the leave and will of Sacrapant ?
What, not a word but mum ? Then, Sacrapant,
Thou art betrayed.

Re-enter the GHOST OF JACK *invisible, and takes* SACRAPANT'S *wreath off from his head, and his sword out of his hand.*

What hand invades the head of Sacrapant ?
What hateful Fury doth envy my happy state ?
Then, Sacrapant, these are thy latest days.
Alas, my veins are numb'd, my sinews shrink,
My blood is pierc'd, my breath fleeting away,
And now my timeless date is come to end !
He in whose life his acts have been so foul,
Now in his death to hell decends his soul. [*Dies.*

G. OF JACK : O, sir, are you gone ? now I hope we shall have some other coil.—Now, master, how like you this ? the conjurer he is dead, and vows never to trouble us more : now get you to your fair lady, and see what you can do with her.—Alas, he heareth me not all this while ! but I will help that.
[*Pulls the wool out of the ears of* EUMENIDES.

EUM. : How now, Jack ! what news ?

G. OF JACK : Here, master, take this sword, and dig with it at the foot of this hill. [*Gives sword.*

EUMENIDES *digs, and spies a light in a glass.*

EUM. : How now, Jack ! what is this ?

G. OF JACK : Master, without this the conjurer could do nothing ; and so long as this light lasts, so long doth his art endure, and this being out, then doth his art decay.

EUM. : Why, then, Jack, I will soon put out this light.

G. OF JACK : Ay, master, how ?

EUM. : Why, with a stone I'll break the glass, and then blow it out.

G. OF JACK : No, master, you may as soon break the smith's anvil as this little vial : nor the biggest blast that ever Boreas blew cannot blow out this little light ; but she that is neither maid, wife, nor widow. Master, wind this horn, and see what will happen. [*Gives horn.*

EUMENIDES *winds the horn. Enter* VENELIA, *who breaks the glass, blows out the light, and then exit.*

So, master, how like you this ? this is she that ran madding in the woods, his betrothed love that keeps the cross ; and now, this light being out, all are restored to their former liberty : and now, master, to the lady that you have so long looked for.

The GHOST OF JACK *draws a curtain, and discovers* DELIA *sitting asleep.*

EUM. : God speed, fair maid, sitting alone,—there is once ; God speed, fair maid,—there is twice ; God speed, fair maid,—that is thrice.

DEL. : Not so, good sir, for you are by.

G. OF JACK : Enough, master, she hath spoke ; now I will leave her with you.
[*Exit.*

EUM. : Thou fairest flower of these western parts,
Whose beauty so reflecteth in my sight
As doth a crystal mirror in the sun ;
For thy sweet sake I have cross'd the frozen Rhine ;
Leaving fair Po, I sail'd up Danuby,
As far as Saba, whose enhancing streams
Cut twixt the Tartars and the Russians :
These have I cross'd for thee, fair Delia :
Then grant me that which I have su'd for long.

DEL. : Thou gentle knight, whose fortune is so good
To find me out and set my brothers free,
My faith, my heart, my hand I give to thee.

EUM. : Thanks, gentle madam : but here comes Jack ; thank him, for he is the best friend that we have.

Re-enter the GHOST OF JACK, *with* SACRAPANT'S *head in his hand.*[1]

How now, Jack, what hast thou there?

G. OF JACK : Marry, master, the head of the conjurer.

EUM. : Why, Jack, that is impossible : he was a young man.

G. OF JACK : Ah, master, so he deceived them that beheld him ! but he was a miserable, old, and crooked man, though to each man's eye he seemed young and fresh ; for, master, this conjurer took the shape of the old man that kept the cross, and that old man was in the likeness of the conjurer. But now, master, wind your horn.

EUMENIDES *winds his horn. Enter* VENELIA, *the* TWO BROTHERS, *and* ERESTUS.

EUM. : Welcome, Erestus ! welcome, fair Venelia !
Welcome, Thelea and Calypha both !
Now have I her that I so long have sought ;
So saith fair Delia, if we have your consent.

FIRST BRO. : Valiant Eumenides, thou well deservest
To have our favours ; so let us rejoice
That by thy means we are at liberty :
Here may we joy each in other's sight,
And this fair lady have her wandering knight.

G. OF JACK : So, master, now ye think you have done ; but I must have a saying to you : you know you and I were partners, I to have half in all you got.

EUM. : Why, so thou shalt, Jack.

G. OF JACK : Why, then, master, draw your sword, part your lady, let me have half of her presently.

EUM. : Why, I hope, Jack, thou dost but jest : I promised thee half I got, but not half my lady.

G. OF JACK : But what else, master ? have you not gotten her ? therefore divide her straight, for I will have half ; there is no remedy.

EUM. : Well, ere I will falsify my word unto my friend, take her all : here, Jack, I'll give her thee.

G. OF JACK : Nay, neither more nor less, master, but even just half.

EUM. : Before I will falsify my faith unto my friend, I will divide her : Jack, thou shalt have half.

[1] But where did the decapitation take place? Perhaps when "the ghost of Jack drew a curtain, and discovered Delia" — the curtain was at the same time so drawn as to conceal the body of the conjurer.

First Bro. : Be not so cruel unto our sister, gentle knight.
Second Bro. : O, spare fair Delia ! she deserves no death.
Eum. : Content yourselves ; my word is passed to him.—Therefore prepare thyself, Delia, for thou must die.
Del. : Then farewell, world ! adieu, Eumenides !

Eumenides *offers to strike, and the* Ghost of Jack *stays him.*

G. of Jack : Stay, master ; it is sufficient I have tried your constancy. Do you now remember since you paid for the burying of a poor fellow ?
Eum. : Ay, very well, Jack.
G. of Jack : Then, master, thank that good deed for this good turn : and so God be with you all !

[*Leaps down in the ground.*

Eum. : Jack, what, art thou gone ? then farewell, Jack !—
Come, brothers, and my beauteous Delia,
Erestus, and thy dear Venelia,
We will to Thessaly with joyful hearts.
All : Agreed : we follow thee and Delia.

[*Exeunt all except* Frolic, Fantastic, *and* Madge.

Fan. : What, gammer, asleep ?
Madge : By the mass, son, 'tis almost day ; and my windows shut at the cock's-crow.
Fro. : Do you hear, gammer ? methinks this Jack bore a great sway amongst them.
Madge : O, man, this was the ghost of the poor man that they kept such a coil to bury ; and that makes him to help the wandering knight so much. But come, let us in : we will have a cup of ale and a toast this morning, and so depart.
Fan. : Then you have made an end of your tale, gammer ?
Madge : Yes, faith : when this was done, I took a piece of bread and cheese, and came my way ; and so shall you have, too, before you go, to your breakfast.

[*Exeunt.*

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c. 1588

DOCTOR FAUSTUS

(By CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE)

A statue of Christopher Marlowe, whose services to English drama are immeasurable, may be found in Canterbury. His father was a shoemaker of that town. He was born in 1564, educated locally and at Corpus Christi, Cambridge, and died ignominiously, after a hectic career among the scum of society, before he was thirty. His sudden end, from a dagger in a tavern brawl, undoubtedly saved him from imprisonment, with Kyd, as a disreputable atheist. He was accused of having uttered such " horreble blasphemes " as that " Moyses was but a juggler, and that one Heriot can do more than hee," that " the first beginnyngs of Religion was only to keep men in awe," that ' yf he was put to write a new religion, he wolde undertake both a more

excellent and a more admirable methode, and that all the new testament is filthely written." It seems certain that he drank more than was good for him. As certainly he was a superb poet, and a great dramatist. And he was acknowledged by Shakespeare as his guide.

Goethe avowed his indebtedness to *Doctor Faustus*: "How greatly it is all planned!" he exclaimed on one occasion. Marlowe wrote it at the age of twenty-four. A lesser play, *Tamburlaine*, achieved a popular success, second only to *The Spanish Tragedy*. Out of a hurricane of bombast, great passages of poetry emerge, and glimpses of a noble mind struggling against a demoralising environment.

THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS

Characters

THE POPE
CARDINAL OF LORRAIN
THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY
DUKE OF VANHOLT
FAUSTUS, VALDES, CORNELIUS, *friends to* FAUSTUS
WAGNER, *servant to* FAUSTUS
CLOWN
ROBIN
RALPH
VINTNER
HORSE-COURSER
A KNIGHT
AN OLD MAN
SCHOLARS, FRIARS, *and* ATTENDANTS
DUCHESS OF VANHOLT
LUCIFER
BELZEBUB
MEPHISTOPHILIS
GOOD ANGEL
EVIL ANGEL
THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS
DEVILS
SPIRITS *in the shapes of* ALEXANDER THE GREAT, *of his* PARAMOUR *and of* HELEN
CHORUS

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS: Not marching now in fields or Thrasymene,
Where Mars did mate the Carthaginians;
Nor sporting in the dalliance of love,
In courts of kings where state is overturn'd;
Nor in the pomp of proud audacious deeds,
Intends our Muse to vaunt her heavenly verse:
Only this, gentlemen,—we must perform
The form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad:
To patient judgments we appeal our plaud,
And speak for Faustus in his infancy.
Now is he born, his parents base of stock,
In Germany, within a town call'd Rhodes:
Of riper years, to Wertenberg he went,
Whereas his kinsmen chiefly brought him up.
So soon he profits in divinity,
The fruitful plot of scholarism grac'd,
That shortly he was grac'd with doctor's name,
Excelling all whose sweet delight disputes
In heavenly matters of theology;
Till swoln with cunning, of a self-conceit,
His waxen wings did mount above his reach,

And, melting, heavens conspir'd his overthrow ;
For, falling to a devilish exercise,
And glutted now with learning's golden gifts,
He surfeits upon cursed necromancy ;
Nothing so sweet as magic is to him,
Which he prefers before his chiefest bliss :
And this the man that in his study sits. [*Exit.*

FAUSTUS *discovered in his study.*

FAUST. : Settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin
To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess :
Having commenc'd, be a divine in show,
Yet level at the end of every art,
And live and die in Aristotle's works.
Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou hast ravish'd me !
Bene disserere est finis logices,
Is, to dispute well, logic's chiefest end ?
Affords this art no greater miracle ?
Then read no more ; thou hast attain'd that end :
A greater subject fitteth Faustus' wit :
Bid Economy farewell, and Galen come,
Seeing, *Ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus :*
Be a physician, Faustus ; heap up gold,
And be eternis'd for some wondrous cure :
Summum bonum medicinæ sanitas,
The end of physic is our body's health.
Why, Faustus, hast thou not attain'd that end ?
Is not thy common talk found aphorisms ?
Are not thy bills hung up as monuments,
Whereby whole cities have escap'd the plague,
And thousand desperate maladies been eas'd ?
Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man.
Couldst thou make men to live eternally,
Or, being dead, raise them to life again,
Then this profession were to be esteem'd.
Physic, farewell ! Where is Justinian ? [*Reads.*
Si una eademque res legatur duobus, alter rem, alter valorem, rei, etc.
A pretty case of paltry legacies. [*Reads.*
Exhæreditare filium non potest pater, nisi, etc.
Such is the subject of the institute,
And universal body of the law :
This study fits a mercenary drudge,
Who aims at nothing but external trash ;
Too servile and illiberal for me.
When all is done, divinity is best :
Jerome's Bible, Faustus ; view it well. [*Reads.*
Stipendium peccati mors est. Ha ! *Stipendium, etc.*
The reward of sin is death : that's hard. [*Reads.*
Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas ;
If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there's no truth in us. Why, then, belike we must sin, and so consequently die :
Ay, we must die an everlasting death.

What doctrine call you this, *Che sera, sera,*
What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu!
These metaphysics of magicians,
And necromantic books are heavenly;
Lines, circles, scenes, letters, and characters;
Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires.
O, what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honour, of omnipotence,
Is promis'd to the studious artisan!
All things that move between the quiet poles
Shall be at my command: emperors and kings
Are but obeyed in their several provinces,
Nor can they raise the wind, or rend the clouds;
But his dominion that exceeds in this,
Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man;
A sound magician is a mighty god:
Here, Faustus, tire thy brains to gain a deity.

Enter WAGNER.

Wagner, commend me to my dearest friends,
The German Valdes and Cornelius;
Request them earnestly to visit me.

WAG.: I will, sir. [*Exit.*

FAUST.: Their conference will be a greater help to me
Than all my labours, plod I ne'er so fast.

Enter GOOD ANGEL *and* EVIL ANGEL.

G. ANG.: O, Faustus, lay thy damned book aside,
And gaze not on it, lest it tempt thy soul,
And heap God's heavy wrath upon thy head!
Read, read the Scriptures:—that is blasphemy.

E. ANG.: Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art
Wherein all Nature's treasure is contain'd:
Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,
Lord and commander of these elements.

[*Exeunt* ANGELS.

FAUST.: How am I glutted with conceit of this!
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please,
Resolve me of all ambiguities,
Perform what desperate enterprise I will?
I'll have them fly to India for gold,
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,
And search all corners of the new-found world
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates;
I'll have them read me strange philosophy,
And tell the secrets of all foreign kings;
I'll have them wall all Germany with brass,
And make swift Rhine circle fair Wertenberg;
I'll have them fill the public schools with silk,
Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad;
I'll levy soldiers with the coin they bring,
And chase the Prince of Parma from our land,
And reign sole king of all the provinces;

Yea, stranger engines for the brunt of war,
Than was the fiery keel at Antwerp's bridge,
I'll make my servile spirits to invent.

Enter VALDES *and* CORNELIUS.

Come, German Valdes and Cornelius,
And make me blest with your sage conference.
Valdes, sweet Valdes, and Cornelius,
Know that your words have won me at the last
To practise magic and concealed arts :
Yet not your words only, but mine own fantasy,
That will receive no object ; for my head
But ruminates on necromantic skill.
Philosophy is odious and obscure ;
Both law and physic are for petty wits ;
Divinity is basest of the three,
Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible, and vile :
'Tis magic, magic, that hath ravish'd me.
Then, gentle friends, aid me in this attempt ;
And I, that have with concise syllogisms
Gravell'd the pastors of the German church,
And made the flowering pride of Wertenberg
Swarm to my problems, as the infernal spirits
On sweet Musæus when he came to hell,
Will be as cunning as Agrippa was,
Whose shadow made all Europe honour him.

VALD. : Faustus, these books, thy wit, and our experience,
Shall make all nations to canonise us.
As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords,
So shall the spirits of every element
Be always serviceable to us three ;
Like lions shall they guard us when we please ;
Like Almain rutters with their horsemen's staves.
Or Lapland giants, trotting by our sides ;
Sometimes like women, or unwedded maids,
Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows
Than have the white breasts of the queen of love :
From Venice shall they drag huge argosies,
And from America the golden fleece
That yearly stuffs old Philip's treasury ;
If learned Faustus will be resolute.

FAUST. : Valdes, as resolute am I in this
As thou to live : therefore object it not.

CORN. : The miracles that magic will perform
Will make thee vow to study nothing else.
He that is grounded in astrology,
Enrich'd with tongues, well seen in minerals,
Hath all the principles magic doth require :
Then doubt not, Faustus, but to be renowm'd,
And more frequented for this mystery
Than heretofore the Delphian oracle.
The spirits tell me they can dry the sea,

And fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks,
Ay, all the wealth that our forefathers hid
Within the massy entrails of the earth :
Then tell me, Faustus, what shall we three want ?

FAUST. : Nothing, Cornelius. O, this cheers my soul !
Come, show me some demonstrations magical,
That I may conjure in some lusty grove,
And have these joys in full possession.

VALD. : Then haste thee to some solitary grove,
And bear wise Bacon's and Albertus' works,
The Hebrew Psalter, and New Testament ;
And whatsoever else is requisite
We will inform thee ere our conference cease.

CORN. : Valdes, first let him know the words of art ;
And then, all other ceremonies learn'd,
Faustus may try his cunning by himself.

VALD. : First I'll instruct thee in the rudiments,
And then wilt thou be perfecter than I.

FAUST. : Then come and dine with me, and, after meat,
We'll canvass every quiddity thereof ;
For, ere I sleep, I'll try what I can do :
This night I'll conjure, though I die therefore.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter two SCHOLARS.

FIRST SCHOL. : I wonder what's become of Faustus, that was wont to make our schools ring with *sic probo*.

SEC. SCHOL. : That shall we know, for see, here comes his boy.

Enter WAGNER.

FIRST SCHOL. : How now, sirrah ! where's thy master ?

WAG. : God in heaven knows.

SEC. SCHOL. : Why, dost not thou know ?

WAG. : Yes, I know ; but that follows not.

FIRST SCHOL. : Go to, sirrah ! leave your jesting, and tell us where he is.

WAG. : That follows not necessary by force of argument, that you, being licentiates, should stand upon : therefore acknowledge your error, and be attentive.

SEC. SCHOL. : Why, didst thou not say thou knewest ?

WAG. : Have you any witness on't ?

FIRST SCHOL. : Yes, sirrah, I heard you.

WAG. : Ask my fellow if I be a thief.

SEC. SCHOL. : Well, you will not tell us ?

WAG. : Yes, sir, I will tell you ; yet, if you were not dunces, you would never ask me such a question, for is not he *corpus naturale* ? and is not that *mobile* ? then wherefore should you ask me such a question ? But that I am by nature phlegmatic, slow to wrath, and prone to lechery (to love, I would say), it were not for you to come within forty foot of the place of execution, although I do not doubt to see you both hanged the next sessions. Thus having triumphed over you, I will set my countenance like a precisian, and begin to speak thus :—Truly, my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner, with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine, if it could speak, would inform your

worships : and so, the Lord bless you, preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren, my dear brethren ! [*Exit.*

FIRST SCHOL. : Nay, then, I fear he has fallen into that damned art for which they two are infamous through the world.

SEC. SCHOL. : Were he a stranger, and not allied to me, yet should I grieve for him. But, come, let us go and inform the Rector, and see if he by his grave counsel can reclaim him.

FIRST SCHOL. : O, but I fear me nothing can reclaim him !

SEC. SCHOL. : Yet let us try what we can do. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FAUSTUS *to conjure.*

FAUST. : Now that the gloomy shadow of the earth,
Longing to view Orion's drizzling look,
Leaps from th' antarctic world unto the sky,
And dims the welkin with her pitchy breath,
Faustus, begin thine incantations,
And try if devils will obey thy hest,
Seeing thou hast pray'd and sacrific'd to them.
Within this circle is Jehovah's name,
Forward and backward anagrammatis'd,
Th' abbreviated names of holy saints,
Figures of every adjunct to the heavens,
And characters of signs and erring stars,
By which the spirits are enforc'd to rise :
Then fear not, Faustus, but be resolute,
And try the uttermost magic can perform.—

Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii ! Valeat numen triplex Jehovæ ! Ignei, aëriim aquatani spiritus, salvete ! Orientis princeps Belzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha, et Demogorgon, propitiamus vos, ut appareat et surgat Mephistophilis, quod tumeraris : per Jehovam, Gehennam, et consecratam aquam quam nunc spargo, signumque crucis quod nunc facio, et per vota nostra, ipse nunc surgat nobis dicatus Mephistophilis !

Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.

I charge thee to return, and change thy shape ;
Thou art too ugly to attend on me :
Go, and return an old Franciscan friar ;
That holy shape becomes a devil best.

[*Exit* MEPHISTOPHILIS.

I see there's virtue in my heavenly words :
Who would not be proficient in this art ?
How pliant is this Mephistophilis,
Full of obedience and humility !
Such is the force of magic and my spells :
No, Faustus, thou art conjuror laureat,
That canst command great Mephistophilis :
Quin regis Mephistophilis fratris imagine.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *like a Franciscan friar.*

MEPH. : Now, Faustus, what wouldst thou have me do ?
FAUST. : I charge thee wait upon me whilst I live,
To do whatever Faustus shall command,

Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere,
Or the ocean to overwhelm the world.

MEPH. : I am a servant to great Lucifer,
And may not follow thee without his leave :
No more than he commands must we perform.

FAUST. : Did not he charge thee to appear to me ?

MEPH. : No, I came hither of mine own accord.

FAUST. : Did not my conjuring speeches raise thee ? speak.

MEPH. : That was the cause, but yet *per accidens* ;
For, when we hear one rack the name of God,
Abjure the Scriptures and his Saviour Christ,
We fly, in hope, to get his glorious soul :
Nor will we come, unless he use such means
Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd.
Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring
Is stoutly to abjure the Trinity,
And pray devoutly to the prince of hell.

FAUST. : So Faustus hath
Already done ; and holds this principle,
There is no chief but only Belzebub ;
To whom Faustus doth dedicate himself.
This word " damnation " terrifies not him,
For he confounds hell in Elysium :
His ghost be with the old philosophers !
But, leaving these vain trifles of men's souls,
Tell me what is that Lucifer thy lord ?

MEPH. : Arch-regent and commander of all spirits.

FAUST. : Was not that Lucifer an angel once ?

MEPH. : Yes, Faustus, and most dearly lov'd of God.

FAUST. : How comes it, then, that he is prince of devils ?

MEPH. : O, by aspiring pride and insolence ;
For which God threw him from the face of heaven.

FAUST. : And what are you that live with Lucifer ?

MEPH. : Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer ?
Conspir'd against our God with Lucifer,
And are for ever damn'd with Lucifer.

FAUST. : Where are you damn'd ?

MEPH. : In hell.

FAUST. : How comes it, then, that thou art out of hell ?

MEPH. : Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it.
Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells,
In being depriv'd of everlasting bliss ?
O, Faustus, leave these frivolous demands,
Which strike a terror to my fainting soul !

FAUST. : What, is great Mephistophilis so passionate
For being deprived of the joys of heaven ?
Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude,
And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess.
Go bear these tidings to great Lucifer :
Seeing Faustus hath incurr'd eternal death
By desperate thoughts against Jove's deity,
Say, he surrenders up to him his soul,

So he will spare him four-and-twenty years,
Letting him live in all voluptuousness ;
Having thee ever to attend on me,
To give me whatsoever I shall ask,
To tell me whatsoever I demand,
To slay mine enemies, and aid my friends,
And always be obedient to my will.
Go and return to mighty Lucifer,
And meet me in my study at midnight,
And then resolve me of thy master's mind.

MEPH. : I will, Faustus. [*Exit.*

FAUST. : Had I as many souls as there be stars,
I'd give them all for Mephistophilis.
By him I'll be great emperor of the world,
And make a bridge thorough the moving air,
To pass the ocean with a band of men ;
I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore,
And make that country continent to Spain,
And both contributory to my crown :
The Emperor shall not live but by my leave,
For any potentate of Germany.
Now that I have obtained what I desir'd,
I'll live in speculation of this art,
Till Mephistophilis return again. [*Exit.*

Enter WAGNER *and* CLOWN.

WAG. : Sirrah boy, come hither.

CLOWN : How, boy ! swowns, boy ! I hope you have seen many boys with such pickadevaunts as I have : boy, quotha !

WAG. : Tell me, sirrah, hast thou any comings in ?

CLOWN : Ay, and goings out too ; you may see else.

WAG. : Alas, poor slave ! see how poverty jesteth in his nakedness ! the villain is bare and out of service, and so hungry, that I know he would give his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, though it were blood-raw.

CLOWN : How ! my soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton, though 'twere blood-raw ! not so, good friend : by'r lady, I had need have it well roasted, and good sauce to it, if I pay so dear.

WAG. : Well, wilt thou serve me, and I'll make thee go like *Qui mihi discipulus ?*

CLOWN : How, in verse ?

WAG. : No, sirrah ; in beaten silk and staves-acre.

CLOWN : How, how, knaves-acre ! ay, I thought that was all the land his father left him. Do you hear ? I would be sorry to rob you of your living.

WAG. : Sirrah, I say in staves-acre.

CLOWN : Oho, oho, staves-acre ! why, then, belike, if I were your man, I should be full of vermin.

WAG. : So thou shalt, whether thou beest with me or no. But, sirrah, leave your jesting, and bind yourself presently unto me for seven years, or I'll turn all the lice about thee into familiars, and they shall tear thee in pieces.

CLOWN : Do you hear, sir ? you may save that labour ; they are too familiar with me already : swowns, they are as bold with my flesh as if they had paid for their meat and drink.

WAG. : Well, do you hear, sirrah ? hold, take these guilders.

[*Gives money.*

CLOWN : Gridirons ! what be they ?
WAG. : Why, French crowns.
CLOWN : Mass, but for the name of French crowns, a man were as good have as many English counters. And what should I do with these ?
WAG. : Why, now, sirrah, thou art at an hour's warning, whensoever and wheresoever the devil shall fetch thee.
CLOWN : No, no ; here, take your gridirons again.
WAG. : Truly, I'll none of them.
CLOWN : Truly, but you shall.
WAG. : Bear witness I gave them him.
CLOWN : Bear witness I give them you again.
WAG. : Well, I will cause two devils presently to fetch thee away.—Baliol and Belcher !
CLOWN : Let your Baliol and your Belcher come here, and I'll knock them, they were never so knocked since they were devils : say I should kill one of them, what would folks say ? " Do ye see yonder tall fellow in the round slop ? he has killed the devil." So I should be called Kill-devil all the parish over.

Enter two DEVILS ; *and the* CLOWN *runs up and down crying.*

WAG. : Baliol and Belcher,—spirits, away ! [*Exeunt* DEVILS.
CLOWN : What, are they gone ? a vengeance on them ! they have vile long nails. There was a he-devil and a she-devil : I'll tell you how you shall know them ; all he-devils has horns, and all she-devils has clifts and cloven feet.
WAG. : Well, sirrah, follow me.
CLOWN : But, do you hear ? if I should serve you, would you teach me to raise up Banios and Belcheos ?
WAG. : I will teach thee to turn thyself to anything, to a dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat, or anything.
CLOWN : How ! a Christian fellow to a dog, or a cat, a mouse, or a rat ! no, no, sir, if you turn me into anything, let it be in the likeness of a little pretty frisking flea, that I may be here and there and everywhere : O, I'll tickle the pretty wenches' plackets ! I'll be amongst them, i'faith.
WAG. : Well, sirrah, come.
CLOWN : But, do you hear, Wagner ?
WAG. : How !—Baliol and Belcher !
CLOWN : O Lord ! I pray, sir, let Banio and Belcher go sleep.
WAG. : Villain, call me Master Wagner, and let thy left eye be diametarily fixed upon my right heel, with *quasi vestigiis nostris insistere.* [*Exit.*
CLOWN : God forgive me, he speaks Dutch fustian.
Well, I'll follow him ; I'll serve him, that's flat. [*Exit.*

FAUSTUS *discovered in his study.*

FAUST. : Now, Faustus, must
Thou needs be damn'd, and canst thou not be sav'd :
What boots it, then, to think of God or heaven ?
Away with such vain fancies, and despair ;
Despair in God, and trust in Belzebub :
Now go not backward : no, Faustus, be resolute :
Why waver'st thou ? O, something soundeth in mine ears,
" Abjure this magic, turn to God again ! "
Ay, and Faustus will turn to God again.

To God? he loves thee not;
The god thou serv'st is thine own appetite,
Wherein is fix'd the love of Belzebub:
To him I'll build an altar and a church,
And offer lukewarm blood of new-born babes.

Enter GOOD ANGEL *and* EVIL ANGEL.

G. ANG.: Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art.
FAUST.: Contrition, prayer, repentance—what of them?
G. ANG.: O, they are means to bring thee unto heaven!
E. ANG.: Rather illusions, fruits of lunacy,
That make men foolish that do trust them most.
G. ANG.: Sweet Faustus, think of heaven and heavenly things.
E. ANG.: No, Faustus; think of honour and of wealth.
[*Exeunt* ANGELS.

FAUST.: Of wealth!
Why, the signiory of Embden shall be mine.
When Mepistophilis shall stand by me,
What god can hurt thee, Faustus? thou art safe:
Cast no more doubts.—Come, Mephistophilis,
And bring glad tidings from great Lucifer;—
Is't not midnight?—come Mephistophilis,
Veni, veni Mephistophile!

Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.

Now tell me what says Lucifer, thy lord?
MEPH.: That I shall wait on Faustus whilst he lives,
So he will buy my service with his soul.
FAUST.: Already Faustus hath hazarded that for thee.
MEPH.: But, Faustus, thou must bequeath it solemnly,
And write a deed of gift with thine own blood;
For that security craves great Lucifer.
If thou deny it, I will back to hell.
FAUST.: Stay, Mephistophilis, and tell me, what good will my soul do thy lord?
MEPH.: Enlarge his kingdom.
FAUST.: Is that the reason why he tempts us thus?
MEPH.: *Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris.*
FAUST.: Why, have you any pain that torture others!
MEPH.: As great as have the human souls of men.
But, tell me, Faustus, shall I have thy soul?
And I will be thy slave, and wait on thee,
And give thee more than thou hast wit to ask.
FAUST.: Ay, Mephistophilis, I give it thee.
MEPH.: Then, Faustus, stab thy arm courageously,
And bind thy soul, that at some certain day
Great Lucifer may claim it as his own;
And then be thou as great as Lucifer.
FAUST. (*stabbing his arm*): Lo, Mephistophilis, for love of thee,
I cut mine arm, and with my proper blood
Assure my soul to be great Lucifer's,
Chief lord and regent of perpetual night!

View here the blood that trickles from mine arm,
And let it be propitious for my wish.
MEPH. : But, Faustus, thou must
Write it in manner of a deed of gift.
FAUST. : Ay, so I will (*writes*). But, Mephistophilis,
My blood congeals, and I can write no more.
MEPH. : I'll fetch thee fire to dissolve it straight. [*Exit.*
FAUST. : Why might the staying of my blood portend ?
Is it unwilling I should write this bill ?
Why streams it not, that I may write afresh ?
Faustus gives to thee his soul : ah, there it stay'd !
Why shouldst thou not ? is not thy soul thine own ?
Then write again, *Faustus gives to thee his soul.*

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *with a chafer of coals.*

MEPH. : Here's fire ; come, Faustus, set it on.
FAUST. : So, now, the blood begins to clear again ;
Now will I make an end immediately. [*Writes.*
MEPH. : O, what will not I do to obtain his soul ! [*Aside.*
FAUST. : *Consummatum est* ; this bill is ended,
And Faustus hath bequeathed his soul to Lucifer.
But what is this inscription on mine arm ?
Homo, fuge : whither should I fly ?
If unto God, he'll throw me down to hell.
My senses are deceiv'd ; here's nothing writ :—
I see it plain ; here in this place is writ,
Homo, fuge : yet shall not Faustus fly.
MEPH. : I'll fetch him somewhat to delight his mind.
[*Aside, and then exit.*

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *with* DEVILS, *who give crowns and rich apparel to* FAUSTUS, *dance, and then depart.*

FAUST. : Speak, Mephistophilis, what means this show ?
MEPH. : Nothing, Faustus, but to delight thy mind withal,
And to show thee what magic can perform.
FAUST. : But may I raise up spirits when I please ?
MEPH. : Ay, Faustus, and do greater things than these.
FAUST. : Then there's enough for a thousand souls.
Here, Mephistophilis, receive this scroll,
A deed of gift of body and of soul :
But yet conditionally that thou perform
All articles prescrib'd between us both.
MEPH. : Faustus, I swear by hell and Lucifer
To effect all promises between us made !
FAUST. : Then hear me read them. (*Reads.*) *On these conditions following. First that Faustus may be a spirit in form and substance. Secondly, that Mephistophilis shall be his servant, and at his command. Thirdly, that Mephistophilis shall do for him, and bring him whatsoever he desires. Fourthly, that he shall be in his chamber or house invisible. Lastly, that he shall appear to the said John Faustus, at all times, in what form or shape soever he please. I,* JOHN FAUSTUS, *of Wertenberg, Doctor, by these presents, do give both body and soul to* LUCIFER *prince of the east, and his minister Mephistophilis ; and furthermore grant unto them, that, twenty-four years being expired, the articles above-written inviolate, full power to fetch or carry the said* JOHN

FAUSTUS, *body and soul, flesh, blood, or goods, into their habitation wheresoever. By me,* JOHN FAUSTUS.

IEPH. : Speak, Faustus, do you deliver this as your deed ?

AUST. : Ay, take it, and the devil give thee good on't !

IEPH. : Now, Faustus, ask what thou wilt.

AUST. : First will I question with thee about hell.
Tell me, where is the place that men call hell ?

IEPH. : Under the heavens.

AUST. : Ay, but whereabout ?

IEPH. : Within the bowels of these elements,
Where we are tortur'd and remain for ever :
Hell hath no limits, nor is it circumscrib'd
In one self place ; for where we are is hell,
And where hell is, there must we ever be :
And, to conclude, where all the world dissolves,
And every creature shall be purified,
All places shall be hell that are not heaven.

AUST. : Come, I think hell's a fable.

IEPH. : Ay, think so still, till experience change thy mind.

AUST. : Why, think'st thou, then, that Faustus shall be damn'd ?

IEPH. : Ay, of necessity, for here's the scroll
Wherein thou hast given thy soul to Lucifer.

AUST. : Ay, and body too : but what of that ?
Think'st thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine
That, after this life, there is any pain ?
Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales.

IEPH. : But, Faustus, I am an instance to prove the contrary,
For I am damn'd, and am now in hell.

AUST. : How ! now in hell !
Nay, an this be hell, I'll willingly be damn'd here :
What ! walking, disputing, etc.
But, leaving off this, let me have a wife,
The fairest maid in Germany ;
For I am wanton and lascivious,
And cannot live without a wife.

IEPH. : How ! a wife !
I prithee, Faustus, talk not of a wife.

AUST. : Nay, sweet Mephistophilis, fetch me one, for I will have one.

IEPH. : Well, thou wilt have one ? Sit there till I come : I'll fetch thee a wife in the devil's name. [*Exit.*

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *with a* DEVIL *drest like a* WOMAN, *with fireworks.*

IEPH. : Tell me, Faustus, how dost thou like thy wife ?

AUST. : A plague on her for a hot whore !

IEPH. : Tut, Faustus,
Marriage is but a ceremonial toy ;
If thou lovest me, think no more of it.
I'll cull thee out the fairest courtesans,
And bring them every morning to thy bed :
She whom thine eye shall like, thy heart shall have,

Be she as chaste as was Penelope,
As wise as Saba, or as beautiful
As was bright Lucifer before his fall.
Hold, take this book, peruse it thoroughly : [*Gives book.*
The iterating of these lines brings gold ;
The framing of this circle on the ground
Brings whirlwinds, tempests, thunder, and lightning ;
Pronounce this thrice devoutly to thyself,
And men in armour shall appear to thee,
Ready to execute what thou desir'st.

FAUST. : Thanks, Mephistophilis : yet fain would I have a book wherein I might behold all spells and incantations, that I might raise up spirits when I please.

MEPH. : Here they are in this book. [*Turns to them.*

FAUST. : Now would I have a book where I might see all characters and planets of the heavens, that I might know their motions and dispositions.

MEPH. : Here they are too. [*Turns to them.*

FAUST. : Nay, let me have one book more,—and then I have done,—wherein I might see all plants, herbs, and trees, that grow upon the earth.

MEPH. : Here they be.

FAUST. : O thou art deceived.

MEPH. : Tut, I warrant thee. [*Turns to them.*

FAUST. : When I behold the heavens, then I repent,
And curse thee, wicked Mephistophilis,
Because thou hast depriv'd me of those joys.

MEPH. : Why, Faustus,
Thinkest thou heaven is such a glorious thing ?
I tell thee, 'tis not half so fair as thou,
Or any man that breathes on earth.

FAUST. : How prov'st thou that ?

MEPH. : 'Twas made for man, therefore is man more excellent.

FAUST. : If it were made for man, 'twas made for me :
I will renounce this magic and repent.

Enter GOOD ANGEL *and* EVIL ANGEL.

G. ANG. : Faustus, repent : yet God will pity thee.

E. ANG. : Thou art a spirit ; God cannot pity thee.

FAUST. : Who buzzeth in mine ears I am a spirit ?
Be I a devil, yet God may pity me ;
Ay, God will pity me, if I repent.

E. ANG. : Ay, but Faustus never shall repent. [*Exeunt* ANGELS.

FAUST. : My heart's so harden'd, I cannot repent :
Scarce can I name salvation, faith, or heaven,
But fearful echoes thunder in mine ears,
" Faustus, thou art damn'd ! " then swords, and knives,
Poison, guns, halters, and envenom'd steel
Are laid before me to despatch myself :
And long ere this I should have slain myself,
Had not sweet pleasure conquer'd deep despair.
Have not I made blind Homer sing to me
Of Alexander's love and Œnon's death ?

And hath not he, that built the walls of Thebes
With ravishing sound of his melodious harp,
Made music with my Mephistophilis ?
Why should I die, then, or basely despair !
I am resolv'd ; Faustus shall ne'er repent.—
Come, Mephistophilis, let us dispute again,
And argue of divine astrology.
Tell me, are there many heavens above the moon ?
Are all celestial bodies but one globe,
As is the substance of this centric earth ?

MEPH. : As are the elements, such are the spheres,
Mutually folded in each other's orb,
And, Faustus,
All jointly move upon one axletree,
Whose terminus is term'd the world's wide pole ;
Nor are the names of Saturn, Mars, or Jupiter
Feign'd, but are erring stars.

FAUST. : But, tell me, have they all one motion, both *situ et tempore* ?

MEPH. : All jointly move from east to west in twenty-four hours upon the poles of the world ; but differ in their motion upon the poles of the zodiac.

FAUST. : Tush,
These slender trifles Wagner can decide :
Hath Mephistophilis no greater skill ?
Who knows not the double motion of the planets ?
The first is finish'd in a natural day ;
The second thus ; as Saturn in thirty years ; Jupiter in twelve ; Mars in four ; the Sun, Venus, and Mercury in a year ; the Moon in twenty-eight days. Tush, these are freshmen's suppositions. But, tell me, hath every sphere a dominion or *intelligentia* ?

MEPH. : Ay.

FAUST. : How many heavens or spheres are there ?

MEPH. : Nine ; the seven planets, the firmament, and the empyreal heaven.

FAUST. : Well resolve me in this question; why have we not conjunctions, oppositions, aspects, eclipses, all at one time, but in some years we have more, in some less ?

MEPH. : *Per in æqualem motum respectu totius.*

FAUST. : Well, I am answered. Tell me who made the world ?

MEPH. : I will not.

FAUST. : Sweet Mephistophilis, tell me.

MEPH. : Move me not, for I will not tell thee.

FAUST. : Villain, have I not bound thee to tell me anything ?

MEPH. : Ay, that is not against our kingdom ; but this is. Think thou on hell, Faustus, for thou art damned.

FAUST. : Think, Faustus, upon God that made the world.

MEPH. : Remember this. [*Exit.*

FAUST. : Ay, go, accursed spirit, to ugly hell !
'Tis thou hast damn'd distressed Faustus' soul
Is't not too late ?

Re-enter GOOD ANGEL *and* EVIL ANGEL.

. ANG. : Too late.

. ANG. : Never too late, if Faustus can repent,

. ANG. : If thou repent, devils shall tear thee in pieces.

G. Ang. : Repent, and they shall never raze thy skin.

[*Exeunt* Angels.

Faust. : Ah, Christ, my Saviour,
Seek to save distressed Faustus' soul !

Enter Lucifer, Belzebub, *and* Mephistophilis.

Luc. : Christ cannot save thy soul, for he is just :
There's none but I have interest in the same.
Faust. : O, who art thou that look'st so terrible ?
Luc. : I am Lucifer,
And this is my companion-prince in hell.
Faust. : O, Faustus, they are come to fetch away thy soul
Luc. : We come to tell thee thou dost injure us ;
Thou talk'st of Christ, contrary to thy promise :
Thou shouldst not think of God : think of the devil,
And of his dam too.
Faust. : Nor will I henceforth : pardon me in this,
And Faustus vows never to look to heaven,
Never to name God, or to pray to Him,
To burn his Scriptures, slay his ministers,
And make my spirits pull his churches down.
Luc. : Do so, and we will highly gratify thee.
Faustus, we are come from hell to show thee some pastime : sit down, and thou shalt see all the Seven Deadly Sins appear in their proper shapes.
Faust. : That sight will be as pleasing unto me,
As Paradise was to Adam, the first day
Of his creation.
Luc. : Talk not of Paradise nor creation ; but mark this show : talk of the devil and nothing else.—Come away !

Enter the Seven Deadly Sins.

Now, Faustus, examine them of their several names and dispositions.
Faust. : What art thou, the first ?
Pride : I am Pride. I disdain to have any parents. I am like to Ovid's flea ; I can creep into every corner of a wench ; sometimes, like a perriwig, I sit upon her brow ; or, like a fan of feathers, I kiss her lips ; indeed, I do—what do I not ? But fie, what a scent is here ! I'll not speak another word, except the ground were perfumed, and covered with cloth of arras.
Faust. : What art thou, the second ?
Covet : I am Covetousness, begotten of an old churl, in an old leathern bag : and, might I have my wish, I would desire that this house and all the people in it were turned to gold, that I might lock you up in my good chest : O, my sweet gold !
Faust. : What art thou, the third ?
Wrath : I am Wrath. I had neither father nor mother : I leapt out of a lion's mouth when I was scarce half an hour old ; and ever since I have run up and down the world with this case of rapiers, wounding myself when I had nobody to fight withal. I was born in hell ; and look to it, for some of you shall be my father.
Faust. : What art thou, the fourth ?
Envy : I am Envy, begotten of a chimney-sweeper and an oyster-wife. I cannot read, and therefore wish all books were burnt. I am lean with seeing

others eat. O, that there would come a famine through all the world, that all might die, and I live alone ! then thou shouldst see how fat I would be. But must thou sit, and I stand ? come down, with a vengeance !

FAUST. : Away, envious rascal !—What art thou, the fifth ?

GLUT. : Who I, sir ? I am Gluttony. My parents are all dead, and the devil a penny they have left me, but a bare pension, and that is thirty meals a day, and ten bevers,—a small trifle to suffice nature. O, I come of a royal parentage ! my grandfather was a Gammon of Bacon, my grandmother a Hogshead of Claret-wine ; my godfathers were these, Peter Pickle-herring and Martin Martlemas-beef ; O, but my godmother, she was a jolly gentlewoman, and well-beloved in every good town and city ; her name was Mistress Margery March-beer. Now, Faustus, thou hast heard all my progeny ; wilt thou bid me to supper ?

FAUST. : No, I'll see thee hanged : thou wilt eat up all my victuals.

GLUT. : Then the devil choke thee !

FAUST. : Choke thyself, glutton !—What art thou, the sixth ?

SLOTH : I am Sloth. I was begotten on a sunny bank, where I have lain ever since ; and you have done me great injury to bring me from thence : let me be carried thither again by Gluttony and Lechery. I'll not speak another word for a king's ransom.

FAUST. : What are you, Mistress Minx, the seventh and last ?

LECKERY : Who I, sir ? I am one that loves an inch of raw mutton better than an ell of fried stock-fish ; and the first letter of my name begins with L.

FAUST. : Away, to hell, to hell !

[*Exeunt the* SINS.

LUC. : Now, Faustus, how dost thou like this ?

FAUST. : O, this feeds my soul !

LUC. : Tut, Faustus, in hell is all manner of delight.

FAUST. : O, might I see hell, and return again,
How happy were I then !

LUC. : Thou shalt ; I will send for thee at midnight.
In meantime take this book ; peruse it thoroughly,
And thou shalt turn thyself into what shape thou wilt.

FAUST. : Great thanks, mighty Lucifer !
This will I keep as chary as my life.

LUC. : Farewell, Faustus, and think on the devil.

FAUST. : Farewell, great Lucifer. [*Exeunt* LUCIFER *and* BELZEBUB.
Come, Mephistophilis. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CHORUS.

CHOR. : Learned Faustus,
To know the secrets of astronomy
Graven in the book of Jove's high firmament,
Did mount himself to scale Olympus' top,
Being seated in a chariot burning bright,
Drawn by the strength of yoky dragons' necks.
He now is gone to prove cosmography,
And, as I guess, will first arrive in Rome,
To see the Pope and manner of his court,
And take some part of holy Peter's feast,
That to this day is highly solemnis'd. [*Exit.*

Enter FAUSTUS *and* MEPHISTOPHILIS.

FAUST. : Having now, my good Mephistophilis,
Pass'd with delight the stately town of Trier,
Environ'd round with airy mountain-tops,
With walls of flint, and deep-entrenched lakes,
Not to be won by any conquering prince ;
From Paris next, coasting the realm of France,
We saw the river Maine fall into Rhine,
Whose banks are set with groves of fruitful vines ;
Then up to Naples, rich Campania,
Whose buildings fair and gorgeous to the eyes,
The streets straight forth, and pav'd with finest brick,
Quarter the town in four equivalents :
There saw we learned Maro's golden tomb,
The way he cut, an English mile in length,
Thorough a rock of stone, in one night's space ;
From thence to Venice, Padua, and the rest,
In one of which a sumptuous temple stands,
That threats the stars with her aspiring top.
Thus hitherto hath Faustus spent his time :
But tell me now what resting-place is this ?
Hast thou, as erst I did command,
Conducted me within the walls of Rome ?

MEPH. : Faustus, I have ; and, because we will not be unprovided, I have taken up his Holiness' privy-chamber for our use.

FAUST. : I hope his Holiness will bid us welcome.

MEPH. : Tut, 'tis no matter, man ; we'll be bold with his good cheer.
And now, my Faustus, that thou mayst perceive
What Rome containeth to delight thee with,
Know that this city stands upon seven hills
That underprop the ground work of the same :
Just through the midst runs flowing Tiber's stream
With winding banks that cut it in two parts ;
Over the which four stately bridges lean,
That make safe passage to each part of Rome :
Upon the bridge call'd Ponte Angelo
Erected is a castle passing strong,
Within whose walls such store of ordnance are,
And double cannons fram'd of carved brass,
As match the days within one complete year ;
Besides the gates, and high pyramides,
Which Julius Cæsar brought from Africa.

FAUST. : Now, by the kingdoms of infernal rule,
Of Styx, of Acheron and the fiery lake,
Of ever-burning Phlegethon, I swear
That I do long to see the monuments
And situation of bright-splendent Rome :
Come, therefore, let's away.

MEPH. : Nay, Faustus, stay : I know you'd fain see the Pope,
And take some part of holy Peter's feast,
Where thou shalt see a troop of bald-pate friars,
Whose *summum bonum* is in belly-cheer.

FAUST. : Well, I'm content to compass then some sport,
And by their folly make us merriment.
Then charm me, that I
May be invisible, to do what I please,
Unseen of any whilst I stay in Rome.
[MEPHISTOPHILIS *charms him.*
MEPH. : So, Faustus : now
Do what thou wilt, thou shalt not be discern'd.

und a Sonnet. Enter the POPE *and the* CARDINAL OF LORRAIN *to the banquet, with* FRIARS *attending.*

OPE : My lord of Lorrain, will't please you draw near ?
AUST. : Fall to, and the devil choke you, an you spare !
OPE : How now ! who's that which spake ?—Friars, look about.
RST FRIAR : Here's nobody, if it like your Holiness.
OPE : My lord, here is a dainty dish was sent me from the Bishop of Milan.
AUST. : I thank you, sir. [*Snatches the dish.*
OPE : How now ! who's that which snatched the meat from me ? will no man look ?—My lord, this dish was sent me from the Cardinal of Florence.
AUST. : You say true ; I'll ha't. [*Snatches the dish.*
OPE : What, again !—My lord, I'll drink to your grace.
AUST. : I'll pledge your grace. [*Snatches the cup.*
OF LOR. : My lord, it may be some ghost, newly crept out of Purgatory, come to beg a pardon of your Holiness.
OPE : It may be so.—Friars, prepare a dirge to lay the fury of this ghost.—
Once again, my lord, fall to. [*The Pope crosses himself.*
AUST. : What, are you crossing of yourself ?
Well, use that trick no more, I would advise you.
[*The Pope crosses himself again.*
Well, there's the second time. Aware the third ;
I give you fair warning.
[*The* POPE *crosses himself again, and* FAUSTUS *hits him a box of the ear ; and they all run away.*
Come on, Mephistophilis ; what shall we do ?
EPH. : Nay, I know not : we shall be cursed with bell, book, and candle.
AUST. : How ! bell, book, and candle,—candle, book, and bell,—
Forward and backward, to curse Faustus to hell !
Anon you shall hear a hog grunt, a calf bleat, and an ass bray,
Because it is Saint Peter's holiday.

Re-enter all the FRIARS *to sing the Dirge.*

RST FRIAR : Come, brethren, let's about our business with good devotion.

They sing.

rsed be he that stole away his Holiness' meat from the table ! maledicat Dominus !
rsed be he that struck his Holiness a blow on the face ! maledicat Dominus !
rsed be he that took Friar Sandelo a blow on the pate ! maledicat Dominus !
rsed be he that disturbeth our holy dirge ! maledicat Dominus !
rsed be he that took away his Holiness' wine ! maledicat Dominus !

Et omnes Sancti ! Amen !
[MEPHISTOPHILIS *and* FAUSTUS *beat the* FRIARS, *and fling fireworks among them ; and so exeunt.*

Enter CHORUS.

CHOR. : When Faustus had with pleasure ta'en the view
Of rarest things, and royal courts of kings,
He stav'd his course, and so returned home ;
Where such as bear his absence but with grief,
I mean his friends and near'st companions,
Did gratulate his safety with kind words,
And in their conference of what befell,
Touching his journey through the world and air,
They put forth questions of astrology,
Which Faustus answer'd with such learned skill
As they admir'd and wonder'd at his wit.
Now is his fame spread forth in every land :
Amongst the rest the Emperor is one,
Carolus the Fifth, at whose palace now
Faustus is feasted 'mongst his noblemen.
What there he did, in trial of his art,
I leave untold ; your eyes shall see['t] perform'd. [*Exit.*

Enter ROBIN *the Ostler, with a book in his hand.*

ROBIN : O, this is admirable ! here I ha' stolen one of Doctor Faustus' conjuring books, and, i'faith, I mean to search some circles for my own use. Now will I make all the maidens in our parish dance at my pleasure, stark naked, before me ; and so by that means I shall see more than e'er I felt or saw yet.

Enter RALPH, *calling* ROBIN.

RALPH : Robin, prithee, come away ; there's a gentleman tarries to have his horse, and he would have his things rubbed and made clean : he keeps such a chafing with my mistress about it : and she has set me to look thee out ; prithee, come away.

ROBIN : Keep out, keep out, or else you are blown up, you are dismembered, Ralph : keep out, for I am about a roaring piece of work.

RALPH : Come, what doest thou with that same book ? thou canst not read ?

ROBIN : Yes, my master and mistress shall find that I can read, he for his forehead, she for her private study ; she's born to bear with me, or else my art fails.

RALPH : Why, Robin, what book is that ?

ROBIN : What book ! why, the most intolerable book for conjuring that e'er was invented by any brimstone devil.

RALPH : Canst thou conjure with it ?

ROBIN : I can do all these things easily with it ; first, I can make thee drunk with ippocras at any tavern in Europe for nothing : that's one of my conjuring works.

RALPH : Our Master Parson says that's nothing.

ROBIN : True, Ralph : and more, Ralph, if thou hast any mind to Nan Spit, our kitchen-maid, then turn her and wind her to thy own use, as often as thou wilt, and at midnight.

RALPH : O, brave Robin ! shall I have Nan Spit, and to mine own use ? On that condition I'll feed thy devil with horse-bread as long as he lives, of free cost.

ROBIN : No more, sweet Ralph : let's go and make clean our boots, which lie foul upon our hands, and then to our conjuring in the devil's name.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter ROBIN *and* RALPH *with a silver goblet.*

OBIN : Come, Ralph : did not I tell thee, we were for ever made by this Doctor Faustus' book ? *ecce, signum !* here's a simple purchase for horse-keepers : our horses shall eat no hay as long as this lasts.
ALPH : But, Robin, here comes the Vintner.
OBIN : Hush ! I'll gull him supernaturally.

Enter VINTNER.

Drawer, I hope all is paid ; God be with you !—Come, Ralph.
INT. : Soft, sir ; a word with you. I must yet have a goblet paid from you, ere you go.
OBIN : I a goblet, Ralph, I a goblet !—I scorn you, and you are but a, etc. I a goblet ! search me.
INT. : I mean so, sir, with your favour. [*Searches* ROBIN.
OBIN : How say you now ?
INT. : I must say somewhat to your fellow.—You, sir !
OBIN : Me, sir ! me, sir ! search your fill. (VINTNER *searches him.*) Now, sir, you may be ashamed to burden honest men with a matter of truth.
INT. : Well, one of you hath this goblet about you.
OBIN : You lie, drawer, 'tis afore me (*aside.*)—Sirrah, you, I'll teach you to impeach honest men ;—stand by ;—I'll scour you for a goblet ;—stand aside you had best, I charge you in the name of Belzebub.—Look to the goblet, Ralph. (*Aside to* RALPH.)
INT. : What mean you, sirrah ?
OBIN : I'll tell you what I mean. (*Reads from a book*) *Sanctobulorum Periphrasticon* —nay, I'll tickle you, Vintner.—Look to the goblet, Ralph (*Aside to* RALPH.) —(*Reads*) *Polypragmos Belseborams framanto pacostiphos tostu, Mephistophilis*, etc.

Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS, *sets squibs at their backs, and then exit. They run about.*

INT. : *O, nomine Domini !* what meanest thou, Robin ? thou hast no goblet.
ALPH : *Peccatum peccatorum !*—Here's thy goblet, good Vintner.
[*Gives the goblet to* VINTNER, *who exit.*
OBIN : *Misericordia pro nobis !* what shall I do ? Good devil, forgive me now, and I'll never rob thy library more.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.

EPH. : Monarch of hell, under whose black survey
Great potentates do kneel with awful fear,
Upon whose altars thousand souls do lie,
How am I vexed with these villains' charms ?
From Constantinople am I hither come,
Only for pleasure of these damned slaves.
OBIN : How, from Constantinople ! you have had a great journey : will you take sixpence in your purse to pay for your supper, and be gone ?
EPH. : Well, villains, for your presumption, I transform thee into an ape, and thee into a dog ; and so be gone ! [*Exit.*
OBIN : How, into an ape ! that's brave : I'll have fine sport with the boys ; I'll get nuts and apples enow.
ALPH : And I must be a dog.
OBIN : I'faith, thy head will never be out of the pottage-pot. [*Exeunt.*

Enter EMPEROR, FAUSTUS, *and a* KNIGHT, *with* ATTENDANTS.

EMP. : Master Doctor Faustus, I have heard strange report of thy knowledge in the black art, how that none in my empire nor in the whole world can compare with thee for the rare effects of magic : they say thou hast a familiar spirit, by whom thou canst accomplish what thou list. This, therefore, is my request, that thou let me see some proof of thy skill, that mine eyes may be witnesses to confirm what mine ears have heard reported : and here I swear to thee, by the honour of mine imperial crown, that, whatever thou doest, thou shalt be no ways prejudiced or endamaged.

KNIGHT : I'faith, he looks much like a conjurer. [*Aside.*

FAUST. : My gracious sovereign, though I must confess myself far inferior to the report men have published, and nothing answerable to the honour of your imperial majesty, yet, for that love and duty binds me thereunto, I am content to do whatsoever your majesty shall command me.

EMP. : Then, Doctor Faustus, mark what I shall say.

As I was sometime solitary set
Within my closet, sundry thoughts arose
About the honour of mine ancestors,
How they had won by prowess such exploits,
Got such riches, subdu'd so many kingdoms,
As we that do succeed, or they that shall
Hereafter possess our throne, shall
(I fear me) ne'er attain to that degree
Of high renown and great authority :
Amongst which kings is Alexander the Great,
Chief spectacle of the world's pre-eminence,
The bright shining of whose glorious acts
Lightens the world with his reflecting beams,
As when I hear but motion made of him,
It grieves my soul I never saw the man :
If, therefore, thou, by cunning of thine art,
Canst raise this man from hollow vaults below,
Where lies entomb'd this famous conqueror,
And bring with him his beauteous paramour,
Both in their right shapes, gesture, and attire
They us'd to wear during their time of life,
Thou shalt both satisfy my just desire,
And give me cause to praise thee whilst I live.

FAUST. : My gracious lord, I am ready to accomplish your request, so far forth as by art and power of my spirit I am able to perform.

KNIGHT. : I'faith, that's just nothing at all. [*Aside.*

FAUST. : But, if it like your grace, it is not in my ability to present before your eyes the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes, which long since are consumed to dust.

KNIGHT : Ay, marry, Master Doctor, now there's a sign of grace in you, when you will confess the truth. [*Aside.*

FAUST. : But such spirits as can lively resemble Alexander and his paramour shall appear before your grace, in that manner that they both lived in, in their most flourishing estate ; which I doubt not shall sufficiently content your imperial majesty.

EMP. : Go to, Master Doctor ; let me see them presently.

KNIGHT : Do you hear, Master Doctor ? you bring Alexander and his paramour before the Emperor !

FAUST. : How then, sir ?

KNIGHT : I'faith, that's as true as Diana turned me to a stag.

FAUST. : No, sir ; but, when Actæon died, he left the horns for you.—Mephistophilis, be gone. [*Exit* MEPHISTOPHILIS.

KNIGHT : Nay, an you go to conjuring, I'll be gone. [*Exit.*

FAUST. : I'll meet with you anon for interrupting me so.—Here they are, my gracious lord.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *with* SPIRITS *in the shapes of* ALEXANDER *and his* PARAMOUR.

EMP. : Master Doctor, I heard this lady, while she lived, had a wart or mole in her neck : how shall I know whether it be so or no ?

FAUST. : Your highness may boldly go and see.

EMP. : Sure, these are no spirits, but the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes. [*Exeunt* SPIRITS.

FAUST. : Wilt please your highness now to send for the knight that was so pleasant with me here of late ?

EMP. : One of you call him forth. [*Exit* ATTENDANT.

Re-enter the KNIGHT *with a pair of horns on his head.*

How now, sir knight ! why, I had thought thou hadst been a bachelor, but now I see thou hast a wife, that not only gives thee horns, but makes thee wear them. Feel on thy head.

KNIGHT : Thou damned wretch and execrable dog,
Bred in the concave of some monstrous rock,
How dar'st thou thus abuse a gentleman ?
Villain, I say, undo what thou hast done !

FAUST. : O, not so fast, sir ! there's no haste : but, good, are you remembered how you crossed me in my conference with the Emperor ? I think I have met with you for it.

EMP. : Good Master Doctor, at my entreaty release him : he hath done penance sufficient.

FAUST. : My gracious lord, not so much for the injury he offered me here in your presence, as to delight you with some mirth, hath Faustus worthily requited this injurious knight ; which being all I desire, I am content to release him of his horns :—and, sir knight, hereafter speak well of scholars.—Mephistophilis, transform him straight. (MEPHISTOPHILIS *removes the horns.*)—Now, my good lord, having done my duty, I humbly take my leave.

EMP. : Farewell, Master Doctor : yet, ere you go,
Expect from me a bounteous reward.

[*Exeunt* EMPEROR, KNIGHT, *and* ATTENDANTS.

FAUST. : Now, Mephistophilis, the restless course
That time doth run with calm and silent foot,
Shortening my days and thread of vital life,
Calls for the payment of my latest years :
Therefore, sweet Mephistophilis, let us
Make haste to Wertenberg,

MEPH. : What, will you go on horse-back or on foot ?

FAUST. : Nay, till I'm past this fair and pleasant green,
I'll walk on foot.

Enter a HORSE-COURSER.

HORSE-C. : I have been all this day seeking one Master Fustian : mass, see where he is !—God save you Master Doctor !

FAUST. : What, horse-courser ! you are well met.

HORSE-C. : Do you hear, sir ? I have brought you forty dollars for your horse.

FAUST. : I cannot sell him so : if thou likest him for fifty, take him.

HORSE-C. : Alas, sir, I have no more !—I pray you, speak for me.

MEPH. : I pray you, let him have him : he is an honest fellow, and he has a great charge, neither wife nor child.

FAUST. : Well, come, give me your money (*Horse-courser gives* FAUSTUS *the money*) : my boy will deliver him to you. But I must tell you one thing before you have him ; ride him not into the water, at any hand.

HORSE-C. : Why, sir, will he not drink of all waters ?

FAUST. : O, yes, he will drink of all waters ; but ride him not into the water ; ride him over hedge or ditch, or where thou wilt, but not into the water.

HORSE-C. : Well, sir.—Now am I made man for ever : I'll not leave my horse for forty : if he had but the quality of hey-ding-ding, hey-ding-ding, I'd make a brave living on him : he has a buttock as slick as an eel (*Aside.*)—Well, God b'wi'ye, sir : your boy will deliver him me : but, hark you, sir ; if my horse be sick or ill at ease if I bring his water to you, you'll tell me what it is ?

FAUST. : Away, you villain ! what, dost think I am a horse-doctor ?

[*Exit* HORSE-COURSER.

What art thou, Faustus, but a man condemn'd to die ?
Thy fatal time doth draw to final end ;
Despair doth drive distrust into my thoughts :
Confound these passions with a quiet sleep :
Tush, Christ did call the thief upon the Cross ;
Then rest thee, Faustus, quiet in conceit. [*Sleeps in his chair.*

Re-enter HORSE-COURSER, *all wet, crying.*

HORSE-C. : Alas, alas ! Doctor Fustian, quotha ? mass, Doctor Lopus was never such a doctor : has given me a purgation, has purged me of forty dollars ; I shall never see them more. But yet, like an ass as I was, I would not be ruled by him, for he bade me I should ride him into no water : now I, thinking my horse had had some rare quality that he would not have had me know of, I, like a venturous youth, rid him into the deep pond at the town's end. I was no sooner in the middle of the pond, but my horse vanished away, and I sat upon a bottle of hay, never so near drowning in my life. But I'll seek out my doctor, and have my forty dollars again, or I'll make it the dearest horse !—O, yonder is his snipper-snapper. Do you hear ? you, hey-pass, where's your master ?

MEPH. : Why, sir, what would you ? you cannot speak with him.

HORSE-C. : But I will speak with him.

MEPH. : Why, he's fast asleep : come some other time.

HORSE-C. : I'll speak with him now, or I'll break his glass-windows about his ears.

MEPH. : I tell thee, he has not slept this eight nights.

HORSE-C. : An he have not slept this eight weeks, I'll speak with him.

MEPH. : See, where he is, fast asleep.

HORSE-C. : Ay, this is he.—God save you, Master Doctor, Master Doctor, Master Doctor Fustian ! forty dollars, forty dollars for a bottle of hay !

MEPH. : Why, thou seest he hears thee not.

HORSE-C. : So-ho, ho ! so-ho, ho ! (*Hollows in his ear.*) No, will you not wake ? I'll make you wake ere I go. (*Pulls* FAUSTUS *by the leg, and pulls it away.*) Alas, I am undone ! what shall I do ?

AUST. : O, my leg, my leg !—Help, Mephistophilis ! call the officers.—My leg, my leg !

EPH. : Come, villain, to the constable.

HORSE-C. : O Lord, sir, let me go, and I'll give you forty dollars more !

EPH. : Where be they ?

HORSE-C. : I have none about me : come to my ostry, and I'll give them you.

EPH. : Be gone quickly. [HORSE-COURSER *runs away.*

AUST. : What, is he gone ? farewell he ! Faustus has his leg again, and the Horse-courser, I take it, a bottle of hay for his labour : well, this trick shall cost him forty dollars more.

Enter WAGNER.

How now, Wagner ! what's the news with thee ?

VAG. : Sir, the Duke of Vanholt doth earnestly entreat your company.

AUST. : The Duke of Vanholt ! an honourable gentleman, to whom I must be no niggard of my cunning.—Come, Mephistophilis, let's away to him.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter the DUKE OF VANHOLT, *the* DUCHESS, *and* FAUSTUS.

DUKE : Believe me, Master Doctor, this merriment hath much pleased me.

AUST. : My gracious lord, I am glad it contents you so well.—But it may be, madam, you take no delight in this. I have heard that great-bellied women do long for some dainties or other : what is it, madam ? tell me, and you shall have it.

DUCHESS : Thanks, good Master Doctor : and, for I see your courteous intent to pleasure me, I will not hide from you the thing my heart desires ; and, were it now summer, as it is January and the dead time of the winter, I would desire no better meat than a dish of ripe grapes.

AUST. : Alas, madam, that's nothing !—Mephistophilis, be gone. [*Exit* MEPHISTOPHILIS.] Were it a greater thing than this, so it would content you, you should have it.

Re-enter MEPHISTOPHILIS *with grapes.*

Here they be, madam : wilt please you taste on them ?

DUKE : Believe me, Master Doctor, this makes me wonder above the rest, that being in the dead time of winter and in the month of January, how you should come by these grapes.

AUST. : If it like your grace, the year is divided into two circles over the whole world, that, when it is here winter with us, in the contrary circle it is summer with them, as in India, Saba, and farther countries in the east ; and by means of a swift spirit that I have, I had them brought hither, as you see.—How do you like them, madam ? be they good ?

DUCHESS : Believe me, Master Doctor, they be the best grapes that e'er I tasted in my life before.

AUST. : I am glad they content you so, madam.

DUKE : Come, madam, let us in, where you must well reward this learned man for the great kindness he hath showed to you.

DUCHESS : And so I will, my lord ; and, whilst I live, rest beholding for this courtesy.

FAUST. : I humbly thank your grace.

DUKE : Come, Master Doctor, follow us, and receive your reward.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter WAGNER.

WAG. : I think my master means to die shortly,
For he hath given to me all his goods :
And yet, methinks, if that death were near,
He would not banquet, and carouse, and swill,
Amongst the students, as even now he doth,
Who are at supper with such belly-cheer
As Wagner ne'er beheld in all his life.
See, where they come ! belike the feast is ended. [*Exit.*

Enter FAUSTUS *with two or three* SCHOLARS, *and* MEPHISTOPHILIS.

FIRST SCHOL. : Master Doctor Faustus, since our conference about fair ladies, which was the beautifulest in all the world, we have determined with ourselves that Helen of Greece was the admirablest lady that ever lived : therefore, Master Doctor, if you will do us that favour, as to let us see that peerless dame of Greece, whom all the world admires for majesty, we should think ourselves much beholding unto you.

FAUST. : Gentlemen,
For that I know your friendship is unfeign'd,
And Faustus' custom is not to deny
The just requests of those that wish him well,
You shall behold that peerless dame of Greece,
No otherways for pomp and majesty
Than when Sir Paris cross'd the seas with her,
And brought the spoils to rich Dardania.
Be silent, then, for danger is in words.

[*Music sounds, and* HELEN *passeth over the stage.*

SEC. SCHOL. : Too simple is my wit to tell her praise,
Whom all the world admires for majesty.

THIRD SCHOL. : No marvel though the angry Greeks pursu'd
With ten years' war the rape of such a queen,
Whose heavenly beauty passeth all compare.

FIRST SCHOL. : Since we have seen the pride of Nature's works,
And only paragon of excellence,
Let us depart ; and for this glorious deed,
Happy and blest be Faustus evermore !

FAUST. : Gentlemen, farewell : the same I wish to you.

[*Exeunt* SCHOLARS.

Enter an OLD MAN.

OLD MAN : Ah, Doctor Faustus, that I might prevail,
To guide thy steps unto the way of life,
By which sweet path thou mayst attain the goal
That shall conduct thee to celestial rest !
Break heart, drop blood, and mingle it with tears,
Tears falling from repentant heaviness
Of thy most vile and loathsome filthiness,
The stench whereof corrupts the inward soul

With such flagitious crimes of heinous sin
As no commiseration may expel,
But mercy, Faustus, of thy Saviour sweet,
Whose blood alone must wash away thy guilt.

FAUST. : Where art thou, Faustus ? wretch, what hast thou done ?
Damn'd art thou, Faustus, damn'd ; despair and die !
Hell calls for right, and with a roaring voice
Says, " Faustus, come ; thine hour is almost come " ;
And Faustus now will come to do thee right.

[MEPHISTOPHILIS *gives him a dagger.*

OLD MAN : Ah, stay, good Faustus, stay thy desperate steps !
I see an angel hovers o'er thy head
And, with a vial full of precious grace,
Offers to pour the same into thy soul :
Then call for mercy, and avoid despair.

FAUST. : Ah, my sweet friend, I feel,
Thy words to comfort my distressed soul !
Leave me a while to ponder on my sins.

OLD MAN : I go, sweet Faustus ; but with heavy cheer,
Fearing the ruin of thy hopeless soul. [*Exit.*

FAUST. : Accursed Faustus, where is mercy now ?
I do repent ; and yet I do despair :
Hell strives with grace for conquest in my breast :
What shall I do to shun the snares of death ?

MEPH. : Thou traitor, Faustus, I arrest thy soul
For disobedience to my sovereign lord :
Revolt, or I'll in piece-meal tear thy flesh.

FAUST. : Sweet Mephistophilis, entreat thy lord
To pardon my unjust presumption,
And with my blood again I will confirm
My former vow I made to Lucifer.

MEPH. : Do it, then, quickly, with unfeigned heart,
Lest greater danger do attend thy drift.

FAUST. : Torment, sweet friend, that base and crooked age,
That durst dissuade me from thy Lucifer,
With greatest torments that our hell affords.

MEPH. : His faith is great ; I cannot touch his soul ;
But what I may afflict his body with
I will attempt, which is but little worth.

FAUST. : One thing, good servant, let me crave of thee,
To glut the longing of my heart's desire,—
That I might have unto my paramour
That heavenly Helen which I saw of late,
Whose sweet embracings may extinguish clean
Those thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow,
And keep mine oath I made to Lucifer.

MEPH. : Faustus, this, or what else thou shalt desire,
Shall be perform'd in twinkling of an eye.

Re-enter HELEN.

FAUST. : Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium ?—
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.— [*kisses her.*

Her lips suck forth my soul : see, where it flies !—
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy, shall Wertenberg he sack'd ;
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colours on my plumed crest ;
Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss.
O, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars ;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appear'd to hapless Semele ;
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms ;
And none but thou shalt be my paramour ! [*Exeunt.*

Enter the OLD MAN.

OLD MAN : Accursed Faustus, miserable man,
That from thy soul exclud'st the grace of heaven,
And fly'st the throne of his tribunal-seat !

Enter DEVILS.

Satan begins to sift me with his pride :
As in this furnace God shall try my faith,
My faith, vile hell, shall triumph over thee,
Ambitious fiends, see how the heavens smile
At your repulse, and laugh your state to scorn !
Hence, hell ! for hence I fly unto my God.
[*Exeunt—on one side,* DEVILS, *on the other,* OLD MAN.

Enter FAUSTUS, *with* SCHOLARS.

FAUST. : Ah, gentlemen !
FIRST SCHOL. : What ails Faustus ?
FAUST. : Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow, had I lived with thee, then had I lived still ! but now I die eternally. Look, comes he not ? comes he not ?
SEC. SCHOL. : What means Faustus ?
THIRD SCHOL. : Belike he is grown into some sickness by being over-solitary.
FIRST SCHOL. : If it be so, we'll have physicians to cure him.—'Tis but a surfeit ; never fear, man.
FAUST. : A surfeit of deadly sin, that hath damned both body and soul.
SEC. SCHOL. : Yet, Faustus, look up to heaven ; remember God's mercies are infinite.
FAUST. : But Faustus' offence can ne'er be pardoned : the serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus. Ah, gentlemen, hear me with patience, and tremble not at my speeches ! Though my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years, O, would I had never seen Wertenberg, never read book ! and what wonders I have done, all Germany can witness, yea, all the world ; for which Faustus hath lost both Germany and the world, yea, heaven itself, heaven, the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy ; and must remain in hell for ever,

hell, ah, hell, for ever ! Sweet friends, what shall become of Faustus, being in hell for ever ?

THIRD SCHOL. : Yet, Faustus, call on God.

FAUST. : On God, whom Faustus hath abjured ! on God, whom Faustus hath blasphemed ! Ah, my God, I would weep ! but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth blood, instead of tears ! yea, life and soul ! O, he stays my tongue ! I would lift up my hands ; but see, they hold them, they hold them !

ALL. : Who, Faustus ?

FAUST. : Lucifer and Mephistophilis. Ah, gentlemen, I gave them my soul for my cunning !

ALL : God forbid !

FAUST. : God forbade it, indeed ; but Faustus hath done it : for vain pleasure of twenty-four years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I writ them a bill with mine own blood : the date is expired ; the time will come, and he will fetch me.

FIRST SCHOL. : Why did not Faustus tell us of this before, that divines might have prayed for thee ?

FAUST. : Oft have I thought to have done so ; but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces, if I named God, to fetch both body and soul, if I once gave ear to divinity : and now 'tis too late. Gentlemen, away, lest you perish with me.

SEC. SCHOL. : O, what shall we do to save Faustus ?

FAUST. : Talk not of me, but save yourselves, and depart.

THIRD SCHOL. : God will strengthen me ; I will stay with Faustus.

FIRST SCHOL. : Tempt not God, sweet friend ; but let us into the next room, and there pray for him.

FAUST. : Ay, pray for me, pray for me ; and what noise soever ye hear, come not unto me, for nothing can rescue me.

SEC. SCHOL. : Pray, thou, and we will pray that God may have mercy upon thee.

FAUST. : Gentlemen, farewell : if I live till morning, I'll visit you ; if not, Faustus is gone to hell.

ALL : Faustus, farewell. [*Exeunt* SCHOLARS.—*The clock strikes eleven.*

FAUST : Ah, Faustus.

Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,
And then thou must be damn'd perpetually !
Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,
That time may cease, and midnight never come ;
Fair Nature's eye, rise, rise again, and make
Perpetual day ; or let this hour be but
A year, a month, a week, a natural day,
That Faustus may repent and save his soul !
O lente, lente currite, noctis equi !
The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
The devil will come, and Faustus must be damn'd.
O, I'll leap up to my God !—Who pulls me down ?—
See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament !
One drop would save my soul, half a drop : ah, my Christ !—
Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ !
Yet will I call on him : O, spare me, Lucifer !—
Where is it now ? 'tis gone : and see, where God
Stretcheth out his arm, and bends his ireful brows !
Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me,
And hide me from the heavy wrath of God !

No, no !
Then will I headlong run into the earth :
Earth, gape ! O, no, it will not harbour me !
You stars that reign'd at my nativity,
Whose influence hath allotted death and hell,
Now draw up Faustus, like a foggy mist,
Into the entrails of yon labouring clouds,
That, when you vomit forth into the air,
My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths,
So that my soul may but ascend to heaven !
[*The clock strikes the half-hour.*
Ah, half the hour is past ! 'twill all be past anon.
O God,
If thou wilt not have mercy on my soul,
Yet for Christ's sake, whose blood hath ransom'd me,
Impose some end to my incessant pain ;
Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,
A hundred thousand, and at last be sav'd !
O, no end is limited to damned souls !
Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul ?
Or why is this immortal that thou hast ?
Ah, Pythagoras' metempsychosis, were that true,
This soul should fly from me, and I be chang'd
Unto some brutish beast ! all beasts are happy,
For, when they die,
Their souls are soon dissolv'd in elements ;
But mine must live still to be plagu'd in hell.
Curs'd be the parents that engender'd me !
No, Faustus, curse thyself, curse Lucifer
That hath depriv'd thee of the joys of heaven.
[*The clock strikes twelve.*
O, it strikes, it strikes ! Now, body, turn to air,
Or Lucifer, will bear thee quick to hell !
[*Thunder and lightning.*
O soul, be chang'd into little water-drops,
And fall into the ocean, ne'er be found !

Enter DEVILS.

My God, my God, look not so fierce on me !
Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while !
Ugly hell, gape not ! come not, Lucifer !
I'll burn my books !—Ah, Mephistophilis !
[*Exeunt* DEVILS *with* FAUSTUS.

Enter CHORUS.

CHOR. : Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
And burned is Apollo's laurel-bough,
That sometime grew within this learned man.
Faustus is gone : regard his hellish fall,
Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise,
Only to wonder at unlawful things,
Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits
To practise more than heavenly power permits. [*Exit.*

c. 1592

EDWARD THE SECOND

(By CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE)

Shakespeare's histories have been much admired. Few of them are finer than this play, and the best of them are indebted to it (as of course Marlowe was to some extent indebted to earlier chronicle playwrights). The "facts" in all these plays are taken from Stowe and Holinshead, whose labours in English History were largely instrumental in creating a public taste for the drama of "old unhappy far off things." That taste is not shared by our moderns. In the best circles, historical plays are generally voted dull. There is a dullness on one side or the other.

Edward the Second was the last play that Marlowe wrote.

EDWARD THE SECOND

Characters

KING EDWARD THE SECOND
PRINCE EDWARD, *his son, afterwards* KING EDWARD THE THIRD
KENT, *brother to* KING EDWARD THE SECOND
GAVESTON
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY
BISHOP OF COVENTRY
BISHOP OF WINCHESTER
WARWICK
LANCASTER
PEMBROKE
ARUNDEL
LEICESTER
BERKELEY
MORTIMER *the elder*
MORTIMER *the younger, his nephew*
SPENSER *the elder*
SPENSER *the younger, his son*
BALDOCK
BEAUMONT
TRUSSEL
GURNEY
MATREVIS
LIGHTBORN
SIR JOHN OF HAINAULT
LEVUNE
RICE AP HOWEL
ABBOT
MONKS
HERALD
LORDS, POOR MEN, JAMES, MOWER, CHAMPION, MESSENGERS, SOLDIERS, *and* ATTENDANTS
QUEEN ISABELLA, *wife to* KING EDWARD THE SECOND
NIECE *to* KING EDWARD THE SECOND, *daughter to the* DUKE OF GLOCESTER
LADIES

Enter GAVESTON, *reading a letter.*

GAV. : *My father is deceas'd. Come, Gaveston,*
And share the kingdom with thy dearest friend.
Ah, words that make me surfeit with delight !
What greater bliss can hap to Gaveston
Than live and be the favourite of a king !
Sweet prince, I come ! these, these thy amorous lines
Might have enforc'd me to have swum from France,
And, like Leander, gasp'd upon the sand,
So thou wouldst smile, and take me in thine arms.

The sight of London to my exil'd eyes
Is as Elysium to a new-come soul :
Not that I love the city or the men,
But that it harbours him I hold so dear,—
The king, upon whose bosom let me lie,
And with the world be still at enmity.
What need the arctic people love star-light,
To whom the sun shines both by day and night ?
Farewell base stooping to the lordly peers !
My knee shall bow to none but to the king.
As for the multitude, that are but sparks,
Rak'd up in embers of their poverty,—
Tanti,—I'll fawn first on the wind,
That glanceth at my lips, and flieth away.

Enter three POOR MEN.

But how now ! what are these ?
POOR MEN : Such as desire your worship's service.
GAV. : What canst thou do ?
FIRST P. MAN : I can ride.
GAV. : But I have no horse.—What art thou ?
SEC. P. MAN : A traveller.
GAV. : Let me see ; thou wouldst do well
To wait at my trencher, and tell me lies at dinner-time ;
And, as I like your discoursing, I'll have you.—
And what art thou ?
THIRD P. MAN : A soldier, that hath serv'd against the Scot.
GAV. : Why, there are hospitals for such as you :
I have no war ; and therefore, sir, be gone.
THIRD P. MAN : Farewell, and perish by a soldier's hand,
That wouldst reward them with an hospital !
GAV. : Ay, ay, these words of his move me as much
As if a goose should play the porcupine,
And dart her plumes, thinking to pierce my breast.
But yet it is no pain to speak men fair ;
I'll flatter these, and make them live in hope.— [*Aside.*
You know that I came lately out of France,
And yet I have not view'd my lord the king :
If I speed well, I'll entertain you all.
ALL : We thank your worship.
GAV. : I have some business : leave me to myself.
ALL : We will wait here about the court.
GAV. : Do. [*Exeunt* POOR MEN.
These are not men for me ;
I must have wanton poets, pleasant wits,
Musicians, that with touching of a string
May draw the pliant king which way I please
Music and poetry is his delight ;
Therefore I'll have Italian masks by night,
Sweet speeches, comedies, and pleasing shows ;
And in the day, when he shall walk abroad,
Like sylvan nymphs my pages shall be clad ;
My men, like satyrs grazing on the lawns,

Shall with their goat-feet dance the antic hay ;
Sometime a lovely boy in Dian's shape,
With hair that gilds the water as it glides,
Crownets of pearl about his naked arms,
And in his sportful hands an olive-tree,
To hide those parts which men delight to see,
Shall bathe him in a spring ; and there, hard by,
One like Actæon, peeping through the grove,
Shall by the angry goddess be transform'd,
And running in the likeness of an hart,
By yelping hounds pull'd down, shall seem to die :
Such things as these best please his majesty.—
Here comes my lord the king, and the nobles,
From the parliament. I'll stand aside. [*Retires.*

Enter KING EDWARD, KENT, LANCASTER, *the elder* MORTIMER, *the younger* MORTIMER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, *and* ATTENDANTS.

K. EDW. : Lancaster !
LAN. : My lord ?
GAV. : That Earl of Lancaster do I abhor. [*Aside.*
K. EDW. : Will you not grant me this ?—In spite of them
I'll have my will ; and these two Mortimers,
That cross me thus, shall know I am displeased. [*Aside.*
E. MOR. : If you love us, my lord, hate Gaveston.
GAV. : That villain Mortimer ! I'll be his death. [*Aside.*
Y. MOR. : Mine uncle here, this earl, and I myself,
Were sworn to your father at his death,
That he should ne'er return into the realm :
And now, my lord, ere I will break my oath,
This sword of mine, that should offend your foes,
Shall sleep within the scabbard at thy need,
And underneath thy banners march who will,
For Mortimer will hand his armour up.
GAV. : *Mort dieu !* [*Aside.*
K. EDW. : Well, Mortimer, I'll make thee rue these words :
Beseems it thee to contradict thy king ?
Frown'st thou thereat, aspiring Lancaster ?
The sword shall plane the furrows of thy brows,
And hew these knees that now are grown so stiff.
I will have Gaveston ; and you shall know
What danger 'tis to stand against your king.
GAV. : Well done, Ned ! [*Aside.*
LAN. : My lord, why do you thus incense your peers,
That naturally would love and honour you,
But for that base and obscure Gaveston ?
Four earldoms have I, besides Lancaster,—
Derby, Salisbury, Lincoln, Leicester ;
These will I sell, to give my soldiers pay,
Ere Gaveston shall stay within the realm :
Therefore, if he be come, expel him straight.
KENT : Barons and earls, your pride hath made me mute ;
But now I'll speak, and to the proof, I hope.
I do remember, in my father's days,

Lord Percy of the North, being highly mov'd,
Brav'd Mowbray in presence of the king ;
For which, had not his highness lov'd him well,
He should have lost his head ; but with his look
Th' undaunted spirit of Percy was appeas'd,
And Mowbray and he were reconcil'd :
Yet dare you brave the king unto his face.—
Brother, revenge it, and let these their heads
Preach upon poles, for trespass of their tongues.

WAR. : O, our heads !

K. EDW. : Ay, yours ; and therefore I would wish you grant.

WAR. : Bridle thy anger, gentle Mortimer.

Y. MOR. : I cannot, nor I will not ; I must speak.—
Cousin, our hands I hope shall fence our heads,
And strike off his that makes you threaten us.—
Come, uncle, let us leave the brain-sick king,
And henceforth parley with our naked swords.

E. MOR. : Wiltshire hath men enough to save our heads.

WAR. : All Warwickshire will leave him for my sake.

LAN. : And northward Lancaster hath many friends.—
Adieu, my lord ; and either change your mind,
Or look to see the throne, where you should sit,
To float in blood, and at thy wanton head
The glozing head of thy base minion thrown.
[*Exeunt all except* KING EDWARD, KENT, GAVESTON, *and* ATTENDANTS.

K. EDW. : I cannot brook these haughty menaces :
Am I a king, and must be over-rul'd !—
Brother, display my ensigns in the field :
I'll bandy with the barons and the earls,
And either die or live with Gaveston.

GAV. : I can no longer keep me from my lord. [*Comes forward.*

K. EDW. : What, Gaveston ! welcome ! Kiss not my hand :
Embrace me, Gaveston, as I do thee.
Why shouldst thou kneel ? know'st thou not who I am ?
Thy friend, thyself, another Gaveston :
Not Hylas was more mourned for of Hercules
Than thou hast been of me since thy exile.

GAV. : And, since I went from hence, no soul in hell
Hath felt more torment than poor Gaveston.

K. EDW. : I know it.—Brother, welcome home my friend.—
Now let the treacherous Mortimers conspire,
And that high-minded Earl of Lancaster :
I have my wish, in that I joy thy sight ;
And sooner shall the sea o'erwhelm my land
Than bear the ship that shall transport thee hence.
I here create thee Lord High-chamberlain,
Chief Secretary to the state and me,
Earl of Cornwall, King and Lord of Man.

GAV. : My lord, these titles far exceed my worth.

KENT : Brother, the least of these may well suffice
For one of greater birth than Gaveston.

K. Edw. : Cease, brother, for I cannot brook these words.—
Thy worth, sweet friend, is far above my gifts :
Therefore, to equal it, receive my heart.
If for these dignities thou be envied,
I'll give thee more ; for, but to honour thee,
Is Edward pleas'd with kingly regiment.
Fear'st thou thy person ? thou shalt have a guard :
Wantest thou gold ? go to my treasury :
Wouldst thou be lov'd and fear'd ? receive my seal,
Save or condemn, and in our name command
What so thy mind affects, or fancy likes.

Gav. : It shall suffice me to enjoy your love ;
Which whiles I have, I think myself as great
As Cæsar riding in the Roman street,
With captive kings at his triumphant car.

Enter the Bishop of Coventry.

K. Edw. : Whither goes my Lord of Coventry so fast ?

Bish. of Cov. : To celebrate your father's exequies.
But is that wicked Gaveston return'd ?

K. Edw. : Ay, priest, and lives to be reveng'd on thee,
That wert the only cause of his exile.

Gav. : 'Tis true ; and, but for reverence of these robes,
Thou shouldst not plod one foot beyond this place.

Bish. of Cov. : I did no more than I was bound to do :
And, Gaveston, unless thou be reclaim'd,
As then I did incense the parliament,
So will I now, and thou shalt back to France.

Gav. : Saving your reverence, you must pardon me.

K. Edw. : Throw off his golden mitre, rend his stole,
And in the channel christen him anew.

Kent : Ah, brother, lay not violent hands on him !
For he'll complain unto the see of Rome.

Gav. : Let him complain unto the see of hell :
I'll be reveng'd on him for my exile.

K. Edw. : No, spare his life, but seize upon his goods :
Be thou lord bishop, and receive his rents,
And make him serve thee as thy chaplain :
I give him thee ; here, use him as thou wilt.

Gav. : He shall to prison, and there die in bolts.

K. Edw. : Ay, to the Tower, the Fleet, or where thou wilt.

Bish. of Cov. : For this offence be thou accurs'd of God !

K. Edw. : Who's there ? Convey this priest to the Tower.

Bish. of Cov. : True, true.

K. Edw. : But, in the meantime, Gaveston, away,
And take possession of his house and goods.
Come, follow me, and thou shalt have my guard
To see it done, and bring thee safe again.

Gav. : What should a priest do with so fair a house ?
A prison may beseem his holiness. [*Exeunt.*

Enter, on one side, the elder MORTIMER, *and the younger* MORTIMER ; *on the other,* WARWICK, *and* LANCASTER.

WAR. : 'Tis true, the bishop is in the Tower,
And goods and body given to Gaveston.
LAN. : What, will they tyrannise upon the church ?
Ah, wicked king ! accursed Gaveston !
This ground, which is corrupted with their steps,
Shall be their timeless sepulchre or mine.
Y. MOR. : Well, let that peevish Frenchman guard him sure ;
Unless his breast be sword-proof, he shall die.
E. MOR. : How now ! why droops the Earl of Lancaster ?
Y. MOR. : Wherefore is Guy of Warwick discontent ?
LAN. : That villain Gaveston is made an earl.
E. MOR. : An earl !
WAR. : Ay, and besides Lord-chamberlain of the realm,
And Secretary too, and Lord of Man.
E. MOR. : We may not nor we will not suffer this.
Y. MOR. : Why post we not from hence to levy men ?
LAN. : " My Lord of Cornwall," now at every word ;
And happy is the man whom he vouchsafes,
For vailing of his bonnet, one good look.
Thus, arm in arm, the king and he doth march :
Nay, more, the guard upon his lordship waits,
And all the court begins to flatter him.
WAR. : Thus leaning on the shoulder of the king,
He nods, and scorns, and smiles at those that pass.
E. MOR. : Doth no man take exceptions at the slave ?
LAN. : All stomach him, but none dare speak a word.
Y. MOR. : Ah, that bewrays their baseness, Lancaster !
Were all the earls and barons of my mind,
We'd hale him from the bosom of the king,
And at the court-gate hang the peasant up,
Who, swoln with venom of ambitious pride,
Will be the ruin of the realm and us.
WAR. : Here comes my Lord of Canterbury's grace.
LAN. : His countenance bewrays he is displeas'd.

Enter the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, *and an* ATTENDANT.

ARCHB. OF CANT. : First, were his sacred garments rent and torn ;
Then laid they violent hands upon him ; next,
Himself imprison'd, and his goods asseiz'd :
This certify the Pope : away, take horse. [*Exit* ATTENDANT.
LAN. : My lord, will you take arms against the king ?
ARCHB. OF CANT. : What need I ? God himself is up in arms
When violence is offer'd to the church.
Y. MOR. : Then will you join with us, that be his peers,
To banish or behead that Gaveston ?
ARCHB. OF CANT. : What else, my lords ? for it concerns me near ;
The bishoprick of Coventry is his.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA.

Y. MOR. : Madam, whither walks your majesty so fast ?
Q. ISAB. : Unto the forest, gentle Mortimer,
To live in grief and baleful discontent ;

For now my lord the king regards me not,
But dotes upon the love of Gaveston :
He claps his cheeks, and hangs about his neck,
Smiles in his face, and whispers in his ears ;
And, when I come, he frowns, as who should say,
" Go whither thou wilt, seeing I have Gaveston."

E. MOR. : Is it not strange that he is thus bewitch'd ?

Y. MOR. : Madam, return unto the court again :
That sly inveigling Frenchman we'll exile,
Or lose our lives ; and yet, ere that day come,
The king shall lose his crown ; for we have power,
And courage too, to be reveng'd at full.

ARCHB. OF CANT. : But yet lift not your swords against the king.

LAN. : No ; but we will lift Gaveston from hence.

WAR. : And war must be the means, or he'll stay still.

Q. ISAB. : Then let him stay ; for, rather than my lord
Shall be oppress'd with civil mutinies,
I will endure a melancholy life,
And let him frolic with his minion.

ARCHB. OF CANT. : My lords, to ease all this, but hear me speak :
We and the rest, that are his counsellors,
Will meet, and with a general consent
Confirm his banishment with our hands and seals.

LAN. : What we confirm the king will frustrate.

Y. MOR. : Then may we lawfully revolt from him.

WAR. : But say, my lord, where shall this meeting be ?

ARCHB. OF CANT. : At the New Temple.

Y. MOR. : Content.

ARCHB. OF CANT. : And, in the meantime, I'll entreat you all
To cross to Lambeth, and there stay with me.

LAN. : Come, then, let's away.

Y. MOR. : Madam, farewell.

Q. ISAB. : Farewell, sweet Mortimer, and, for my sake,
Forbear to levy arms against the king.

Y. MOR. : Ay, if words will serve ; if not, I must. [*Exeunt.*

Enter GAVESTON *and* KENT.

GAV. : Edmund, the mighty prince of Lancaster,
That hath more earldoms than an ass can bear,
And both the Mortimers, two goodly men,
With Guy of Warwick, that redoubted knight,
Are gone towards Lambeth : there let them remain. [*Exeunt.*

nter LANCASTER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, *the elder* MORTIMER, *the younger* MORTIMER, *the* ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, *and* ATTENDANTS.

LAN. : Here is the form of Gaveston's exile ;
May it please your lordship to subscribe your name.

ARCHB. OF CANT. : Give me the paper.
[*He subscribes, as the others do after him.*

LAN. : Quick, quick, my lord ; I long to write my name.

WAR. : But I long more to see him banish'd hence.

Y. MOR. : The name of Mortimer shall fright the king,
Unless he be declin'd from that base peasant.

Enter KING EDWARD, GAVESTON, *and* KENT.

K. EDW. : What, are you mov'd that Gaveston sits here ?
It is our pleasure ; we will have it so.
LAN. : Your grace doth well to place him by your side,
For nowhere else the new earl is so safe.
E. MOR. : What man of noble birth can brook this sight ?
Quam male conveniunt !—
See, what a scornful look the peasant casts !
PEM. : Can kingly lions fawn on creeping ants ?
WAR. : Ignoble vassal, that, like Phaeton,
Aspir'st unto the guidance of the sun !
Y. MOR. : Their downfall is at hand, their forces down :
We will not thus be fac'd and over-peer'd.
K. EDW. : Lay lands on that traitor Mortimer !
E. MOR. : Lay hands on that traitor Gaveston !
KENT : Is this the duty that you owe your king ?
WAR. : We know our duties ; let him know his peers.
K. EDW. : Whither will you bear him ? stay, or ye shall die.
E. MOR. : We are no traitors ; therefore threaten not.
GAV. : No, threaten not, my lord, but pay them home.
Were I a king—
Y. MOR. : Thou, villain ! wherefore talk'st thou of a king,
That hardly art a gentleman by birth ?
K. EDW. : Were he a peasant, being my minion,
I'll make the proudest of you stoop to him.
LAN. : My lord—you may not thus disparage us.—
Away, I say, with hateful Gaveston !
E. MOR. : And with the Earl of Kent that favours him.
[*Attendants remove* GAVESTON *and* KENT.
K. EDW. : Nay, then, lay violent hands upon your king :
Here, Mortimer, sit thou in Edward's throne ;
Warwick and Lancaster, wear you my crown.
Was ever king thus over-rul'd as I ?
LAN. : Learn, then, to rule us better, and the realm.
Y. MOR. : What we have done, our heart-blood shall maintain.
WAR. : Think you that we can brook this upstart['s] pride ?
K. EDW. : Anger and wrathful fury stops my speech.
ARCHB. OF CANT. : Why are you not mov'd ? be patient, my lord,
And see what we your counsellors have done.
Y. MOR. : My lords, now let us all be resolute,
And either have our wills, or lose our lives.
K. EDW. : Meet you for this, proud over-daring peers !
Ere my sweet Gaveston shall part from me,
This isle shall fleet upon the ocean,
And wander to the unfrequented Inde.
ARCHB. OF CANT. : You know that I am legate to the Pope :
On your allegiance to the see of Rome,
Subscribe, as we have done, to his exile.
Y. MOR. : Curse him, if he refuse ; and then may we
Depose him, and elect another king.
K. EDW. : Ay, there it goes ! but yet I will not yield :
Curse me, depose me, do the worst you can.

LAN. : Then linger not, my lord, but do it straight.
ARCHB. OF CANT. : Remember how the bishop was abus'd :
Either banish him that was the cause thereof,
Or I will presently discharge these lords
Of duty and allegiance due to thee.
K. EDW. : It boots me not to threat ; I must speak fair :
The legate of the Pope will be obey'd.— [*Aside.*
My lord, you shall be Chancellor of the realm ;
Thou, Lancaster, High-Admiral of our fleet ;
Young Mortimer and his uncle shall be earls ;
And you, Lord Warwick, President of the North ;
And thou of Wales. If this content you not,
Make several kingdoms of this monarchy,
And share it equally amongst you all,
So I may have some nook or corner left,
To frolic with my dearest Gaveston.
ARCHB. OF CANT. : Nothing shall alter us ; we are resolv'd.
LAN. : Come, come, subscribe.
Y. MOR. : Why should you love him whom the world hates so ?
K. EDW. : Because he loves me more than all the world.
Ah, none but rude and savage-minded men
Would seek the ruin of my Gaveston !
You that be noble-born should pity him.
WAR. : You that are princely-born should shake him off :
For shame, subscribe, and let the lown depart.
E. MOR. : Urge him, my lord.
ARCHB. OF CANT. : Are you content to banish him the realm ?
K. EDW. : I see I must, and therefore am content :
Instead of ink, I'll write it with my tears. [*Subscribes.*
Y. MOR. : The king is love-sick for his minion.
K. EDW. : 'Tis done : and now, accursed hand, fall off !
LAN. : Give it me : I'll have it publish'd in the streets.
Y. MOR. : I'll see him presently despatch'd away.
ARCHB. OF CANT. : Now is my heart at ease.
WAR. : And so is mine.
PEM. : This will be good news to the common sort.
E. MOR. : Be it or no, he shall not linger here.
[*Exeunt all except* KING EDWARD.
K. EDW. : How fast they run to banish him I love !
They would not stir, were it to do me good.
Why should a king be subject to a priest ?
Proud Rome, that hatchest such imperial grooms,
With these thy superstitious taper-lights,
Wherewith thy antichristian churches blaze,
I'll fire thy crazed buildings, and enforce
The papal towers to kiss the lowly ground,
With slaughter'd priests make Tiber's channel swell,
And banks rais'd higher with their sepulchres !
As for the peers, that back the clergy thus,
If I be king, not one of them shall live.

Re-enter GAVESTON.

GAV. : My lord, I hear it whisper'd everywhere,

That I am banish'd and must fly the land.
K. Edw. : 'Tis true, sweet Gaveston : O, were it false !
The legate of the Pope will have it so,
And thou must hence, or I shall be depos'd.
But I will reign to be reveng'd of them ;
And therefore, sweet friend, take it patiently.
Live where thou wilt, I'll send thee gold enough ;
And long thou shalt not stay ; or if thou dost,
I'll come to thee ; my love shall ne'er decline.
Gav. : Is all my hope turn'd to this hell of grief?
K. Edw. : Rend not my heart with thy too-piercing words :
Thou from this land, I from myself am banish'd.
Gav. : To go from hence grieves not poor Gaveston ;
But to forsake you, in whose gracious looks
The blessedness of Gaveston remains ;
For nowhere else seeks he felicity.
K. Edw. : And only this torments my wretched soul,
That, whether I will or no, thou must depart.
Be governor of Ireland in my stead,
And there abide till fortune call thee home.
Here, take my picture, and let me wear thine : [*They exchange pictures.*
O, might I keep thee here, as I do this,
Happy were I ! but now most miserable.
Gav. : 'Tis something to be pitied of a king.
K. Edw. : Thou shalt not hence ; I'll hide thee, Gaveston.
Gav. : I shall be found, and then 'twill grieve me more.
K. Edw. : Kind words and mutual talk makes our grief greater :
Therefore, with dumb embracement, let us part.
Stay, Gaveston ; I cannot leave thee thus.
Gav. : For every look, my love drops down a tear :
Seeing I must go, do not renew my sorrow.
K. Edw. : The time is little that thou hast to stay,
And, therefore, give me leave to look my fill.
But, come, sweet friend ; I'll bear thee on thy way.
Gav. : The peers will frown.
K. Edw. : I pass not for their anger. Come, let's go :
O, that we might as well return as go !

Enter Queen Isabella.

Q. Isab. : Whither goes my lord ?
K. Edw. : Fawn not on me, French strumpet ; get thee gone !
Q. Isab. : On whom but on my husband should I fawn ?
Gav. : On Mortimer ; with whom, ungentle queen,—
I say no more—judge you the rest, my lord.
Q. Isab. : In saying this, thou wrong'st me, Gaveston :
Is't not enough that thou corrupt'st my lord,
And art a bawd to his affections,
But thou must call mine honour thus in question ?
Gav. : I mean not so ; your grace must pardon me.
K. Edw. : Thou art too familiar with that Mortimer,
And by thy means is Gaveston exil'd :
But I would wish thee reconcile the lords,
Or thou shalt ne'er be reconcil'd to me.

Q. Isab. : Your highness knows, it lies not in my power.
K. Edw. : Away, then ! touch me not.—Come, Gaveston.
Q. Isab. : Villain, 'tis thou that robb'st me of my lord.
Gav. : Madam, 'tis you that rob me of my lord.
K. Edw. : Speak not unto her : let her droop and pine.
Q. Isab. : Wherein, my lord, have I deserv'd these words ?
Witness the tears that Isabella sheds,
Witness this heart, that, sighing for thee, breaks,
How dear my lord is to poor Isabel !
K. Edw. : And witness heaven how dear thou art to me :
There weep ; for, till my Gaveston be repeal'd,
Assure thyself thou com'st not in my sight.

[*Exeunt* King Edward *and* Gaveston.

Q. Isab. : O miserable and distressed queen !
Would, when I left sweet France, and was embarked,
That charming Circe, walking on the waves,
Had chang'd my shape ! or at the marriage-day
The cup of Hymen had been full of poison !
Or with those arms, that twin'd about my neck,
I had been stifled, and not liv'd to see
The king my lord thus to abandon me !
Like frantic Juno, will I fill the earth
With ghastly murmur of my sighs and cries ;
For never doted Jove on Ganymede
So much as he on cursed Gaveston :
But that will more exasperate his wrath ;
I must entreat him, I must speak him fair,
And be a means to call home Gaveston :
And yet he'll ever dote on Gaveston ;
And so am I for ever miserable.

Re-enter Lancaster, Warwick, Pembroke, *the elder* Mortimer, *and the younger* Mortimer.

Lan. : Look, where the sister of the king of France
Sits wringing of her hands and beats her breast !
War. : The king, I fear, hath ill-treated her.
Pem. : Hard is the heart that injures such a saint.
Y. Mor. : I know 'tis 'long of Gaveston she weeps.
E. Mor. : Why, he is gone.
Y. Mor. : Madam, how fares your grace ?
Q. Isab. : Ah, Mortimer, now breaks the king's hate forth,
And he confesseth that he loves me not !
Y. Mor. : Cry quittance, madam, then, and love not him.
Q. Isab. : No, rather will I die a thousand deaths :
And yet I love in vain ; he'll ne'er love me.
Lan. : Fear ye not, madam ; now his minion's gone,
His wanton humour will be quickly left.
Q. Isab. : O, never, Lancaster ! I am enjoin'd
To sue unto you all for his repeal :
This wills my lord, and this must I perform,
Or else be banish'd from his highness' presence.
Lan. : For his repeal, madam ! he comes not back,
Unless the sea cast up his shipwreck'd body.

WAR. : And to behold so sweet a sight as that,
There's none here but would run his horse to death.
Y. MOR. : But, madam, would you have us call him home?
Q. ISAB. : Ay, Mortimer, for, till he be restor'd,
The angry king hath banish'd me the court;
And, therefore, as thou lov'st and tender'st me,
Be thou my advocate unto these peers.
Y. MOR. : What, would you have me plead for Gaveston?
E. MOR. : Plead for him that will, I am resolv'd.
LAN. : And so am I, my lord : dissuade the queen.
Q. ISAB. : O, Lancaster, let him dissuade the king!
For 'tis against my will he should return.
WAR. : Then speak not for him; let the peasant go.
Q. ISAB. : 'Tis for myself I speak, and not for him.
PEM. : No speaking will prevail; and therefore cease.
Y. MOR. : Fair queen, forbear to angle for the fish
Which, being caught, strikes him that takes it dead;
I mean that vile torpedo, Gaveston,
That now, I hope, floats on the Irish seas.
Q. ISAB. : Sweet Mortimer, sit down by me a while,
And I will tell thee reasons of such weight
As thou wilt soon subscribe to his repeal.
Y. MOR. : It is impossible : but speak your mind.
Q. ISAB. : Then thus;—but none shall hear it but ourselves.
[*Talks to* Y. MOR. *apart.*
LAN. : My lords, albeit the queen win Mortimer,
Will you be resolute and hold with me?
E. MOR. : Not I, against my nephew.
PEM. : Fear not; the queen's words cannot alter him.
WAR. : No? do but mark how earnestly she pleads!
LAN. : And see how coldly his looks make denial!
WAR. : She smiles : now, for my life, his mind is chang'd
LAN. : I'll rather lose his friendship, I, than grant.
Y. MOR. : Well, of necessity it must be so.—
My lords, that I abhor base Gaveston
I hope your honours make no question,
And therefore, though I plead for his repeal,
'Tis not for his sake, but for our avail;
Nay, for the realm's behoof, and for the king's.
LAN. : Fie, Mortimer, dishonour not thyself!
Can this be true, 'twas good to banish him?
And is this true, to call him home again?
Such reasons make white black, and dark night day.
Y. MOR. : My lord of Lancaster, mark the respect.
LAN. : In no respect can contraries be true.
Q. ISAB. : Yet, good my lord, hear what he can allege.
WAR. : All that he speaks is nothing; we are resolv'd.
Y. MOR. : Do you not wish that Gaveston were dead?
PEM. : I would he were!
Y. MOR. : Why, then, my lord, give me but leave to speak.
E. MOR. : But, nephew, do not play the sophister.
Y. MOR. : This which I urge is of a burning zeal
To mend the king and do our country good.
Know you not Gaveston hath store of gold,

Which may in Ireland purchase him such friends
As he will front the mightiest of us all ?
And whereas he shall live and be belov'd,
'Tis hard for us to work his overthrow.

WAR. : Mark you but that, my lord of Lancaster.

Y. MOR. : But, were he here, detested as he is,
How easily might some base slave be suborn'd
To greet his lordship with a poniard,
And none so much as blame the murderer,
But rather praise him for that brave attempt,
And in the chronicle enrol his name
For purging of the realm of such a plague !

PEM. : He saith true.

LAN. : Ay, but how chance this was not done before ?

Y. MOR. : Because, my lords, it was not thought upon.
Nay, more, when he shall know it lies in us
To banish him, and then to call him home,
'Twill make him vail the top flag of his pride,
And fear to offend the meanest nobleman.

E. MOR. : But how if he do not, nephew ?

Y. MOR. : Then may we with some colour rise in arms ;
For, howsoever we have borne it out,
'Tis treason to be up against the king ;
So shall we have the people of our side,
Which, for his father's sake, lean to the king,
But cannot brook a night-grown mushroom,
Such a one as my Lord of Cornwall is,
Should bear us down of the nobility :
And, when the commons and the nobles join,
'Tis not the king can buckler Gaveston ;
We'll pull him from the strongest hold he hath.
My lords, if to perform this I be slack,
Think me as base a groom as Gaveston.

LAN. : On that condition Lancaster will grant.

WAR. : And so will Pembroke and I.

E. MOR. : And I.

Y. MOR. : In this I count me highly gratified,
And Mortimer will rest at your command.

Q. ISAB. : And when this favour Isabel forgets,
Then let her live abandon'd and forlorn.—
But see, in happy time, my lord the king,
Having brought the Earl of Cornwall on his way,
Is new return'd. This news will glad him much :
Yet not so much as me ; I love him more
Than he can Gaveston : would he lov'd me
But half so much ! then were I treble-blest.

Re-enter KING EDWARD, *mourning*.

K. EDW. : He's gone, and for his absence thus I mourn :
Did never sorrow go so near my heart
As doth the want of my sweet Gaveston ;
And, could my crown's revenue bring him back,
I would freely give it to his enemies,
And think I gain'd, having bought so dear a friend.

Q. ISAB. : Hark, how he harps upon his minion !
K. EDW. : My heart is as an anvil unto sorrow,
Which beats upon it like the Cyclops' hammers,
And with the noise turns up my giddy brain,
And makes me frantic for my Gaveston.
Ah, had some bloodless Fury rose from hell,
And with my kingly sceptre struck me dead,
When I was forc'd to leave my Gaveston !
LAN. : *Diablo*, what passions call you these ?
Q. ISAB. : My gracious lord, I come to bring you news.
K. EDW. : That you have parled with your Mortimer ?
Q. ISAB. : That Gaveston, my lord, shall be repeal'd.
K. EDW. : Repeal'd ! the news is too sweet to be true.
Q. ISAB. : But will you love me, if you find it so ?
K. EDW. : If it be so, what will not Edward do ?
Q. ISAB. : For Gaveston, but not for Isabel.
K. EDW. : For thee, fair queen, if thou lov'st Gaveston :
I'll hang a golden tongue about thy neck,
Seeing thou hast pleaded with so good success.
Q. ISAB. : No other jewels hang about my neck
Than these, my lord ; nor let me have more wealth
Than I may fetch from this rich treasury.
O, how a kiss revives poor Isabel !
K. EDW. : Once more receive my hand ; and let this be
A second marriage 'twixt thyself and me.
Q. ISAB. : And may it prove more happy than the first !
My gentle lord, bespeak these nobles fair,
That wait attendance for a gracious look,
And on their knees salute your majesty.
K. EDW. : Courageous Lancaster, embrace thy king ;
And, as gross vapours perish by the sun,
Even so let hatred with thy sovereign's smile :
Live thou with me as my companion.
LAN. : This salutation overjoys my heart.
K. EDW. : Warwick shall be my chiefest counsellor :
These silver hairs will more adorn my court
Than gaudy silks or rich embroidery.
Chide me, sweet Warwick, if I go astray.
WAR. : Slay me, my lord, when I offend your grace.
K. EDW. : In solemn triumphs and in public shows
Pembroke shall bear the sword before the king.
PEM. : And with this sword Pembroke will fight for you.
K. EDW. : But wherefore walks young Mortimer aside ?
Be thou commander of our royal fleet ;
Or, if that lofty office like thee not,
I make thee here Lord Marshal of the realm.
Y. MOR. : My lord, I'll marshal so your enemies,
As England shall be quiet, and you safe.
K. EDW. : And as for you, Lord Mortimer of Chirke,
Whose great achievements in our foreign war
Deserve no common place nor mean reward,
Be you the general of the levied troops
That now are ready to assail the Scots.

E. Mor. : In this your grace hath highly honour'd me,
For with my nature war doth best agree.
Q. Isab. : Now is the king of England rich and strong,
Having the love of his renowmed peers.
K. Edw. : Ay, Isabel, ne'er was my heart so light.—
Clerk of the crown, direct our warrant forth,
For Gaveston, to Ireland !

Enter Beaumont *with warrant.*

Beaumont, fly
As fast as Iris or Jove's Mercury.
Beau. : It shall be done, my gracious lord. [*Exit.*
K. Edw. : Lord Mortimer, we leave you to your charge.
Now let us in, and feast it royally.
Against our friend the Earl of Cornwall comes
We'll have a general tilt and tournament ;
And then his marriage shall be solemnis'd ;
For wot you not that I have made him sure
Unto our cousin, the Earl of Glocester's heir ?
Lan. : Such news we hear, my lord.
K. Edw. : That day, if not for him, yet for my sake,
Who in the triumph will be challenger,
Spare for no cost ; we will requite your love.
War. : In this or aught your highness shall command us.
K. Edw. : Thanks, gentle Warwick. Come, let's in and revel.
[*Exeunt all except the elder* Mortimer *and the younger* Mortimer.
E. Mor. : Nephew, I must to Scotland ; thou stay'st here.
Leave now to oppose thyself against the king :
Thou seest by nature he is mild and calm ;
And, seeing his mind so dotes on Gaveston,
Let him without controlment have his will.
The mightiest kings have had their minions ;
Great Alexander lov'd Hephæstion,
The conquering Hercules for Hylas wept,
And for Patroclus stern Achilles droop'd.
And not kings only, but the wisest men ;
The Roman Tully lov'd Octavius,
Grave Socrates wild Alcibiades.
Then let his grace, whose youth is flexible,
And promiseth as much as we can wish,
Freely enjoy that vain light-headed earl ;
For riper years will wean him from such toys.
Y. Mor. : Uncle, his wanton humour grieves not me ;
But this I scorn, that one so basely-born
Should by his sovereign's favour grow so pert,
And riot it with the treasure of the realm,
While soldiers mutiny for want of pay.
He wears a lord's revenue on his back,
And, Midas-like, he jets it in the court,
With base outlandish cullions at his heels,
Whose proud fantastic liveries make such show
As if that Proteus, god of shapes, appear'd.

I have not seen a dapper Jack so brisk :
He wears a short Italian hooded cloak,
Larded with pearl, and in his Tuscan cap
A jewel of more value than the crown.
While others walk below, the king and he,
From out a window, laugh at such as we,
And flout our train, and jest at our attire.
Uncle, 'tis this that makes me impatient.

E. MOR. : But, nephew, now you see the king is chang'd.

Y. MOR. : Then so am I, and live to do him service :
But, whiles I have a sword, a hand, a heart,
I will not yield to any such upstart.
You know my mind : come, uncle, let's away. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the younger SPENSER *and* BALDOCK.

BALD. : Spenser,
Seeing that our lord the Earl of Glocester's dead,
Which of the nobles dost thou mean to serve ?

Y. SPEN. : Not Mortimer, nor any of his side,
Because the king and he are enemies.
Baldock, learn this of me : a factious lord
Shall hardly do himself good, much less us ;
But he that hath the favour of a king
May with one word advance us while we live.
The liberal Earl of Cornwall is the man
On whose good fortune Spenser's hope depends.

BALD. : What, mean you, then, to be his follower ?

Y. SPEN. : No, his companion ; for he loves me well,
And would have once preferr'd me to the king.

BALD. : But he is banish'd ; there's small hope of him.

Y. SPEN. : Ay, for a while ; but, Baldock, mark the end.
A friend of mine told me in secrecy
That he's repeal'd and sent for back again ;
And even now a post came from the court
With letters to our lady from the king ;
And, as she read, she smil'd ; which makes me think
It is about her lover Gaveston.

BALD. : 'Tis like enough ; for, since he was exil'd,
She neither walks abroad nor comes in sight.
But I had thought the match had been broke off,
And that his banishment had chang'd her mind.

Y. SPEN. : Our lady's first love is not wavering ;
My life for thine, she will have Gaveston.

BALD. : Then hope I by her means to be preferr'd,
Having read unto her since she was a child.

Y. SPEN. : Then, Baldock, you must cast the scholar off,
And learn to court it like a gentleman.
'Tis not a black coat and a little band,
A velvet-cap'd cloak, fac'd before with serge,
And smelling to a nosegay all the day,
Or holding of a napkin in your hand,
Or saying a long grace at a table's end,
Or making low legs to a nobleman,

Or looking downward, with your eye-lids close,
And saying, " Truly, an't may please your honour,"
Can get you any favour with great men :
You must be proud, bold, pleasant, resolute,
And now and then stab, as occasion serves.

BALD. : Spenser, thou know'st I hate such formal toys,
And use them but of mere hypocrisy.
Mine old lord, whiles he liv'd, was so precise,
That he would take exceptions at my buttons,
And, being like pins' heads, blame me for the bigness ;
Which made me curate-like in mine attire,
Though inwardly licentious enough,
And apt for any kind of villany.
I am none of these common pedants, I,
That cannot speak without *propterea quod.*

Y. SPEN. : But one of those that saith *quando-quidem,*
And hath a special gift to form a verb.

BALD. : Leave off this jesting ; here my lady comes.

Enter KING EDWARD'S NIECE.

NIECE : The grief for his exile was not so much
As is the joy of his returning home.
This letter came from my sweet Gaveston :
What need'st thou, love, thus to excuse thyself?
I know thou couldst not come and visit me. [*Reads.*
I will not long be from thee, though I die ;—
This argues the entire love of my lord ;— [*Reads.*
When I forsake thee, death seize on my heart !—
But stay thee here where Gaveston shall sleep.
[*Puts the letter into her bosom.*
Now to the letter of my lord the king :
He wills me to repair unto the court,
And meet my Gaveston : why do I stay,
Seeing that he talks thus of my marriage day ?—
Who's there ? Baldock !
See that my coach be ready ; I must hence.

BALD. : It shall be done, madam.

NIECE : And meet me at the park-pale presently. [*Exit* BALDOCK.
Spenser, stay you, and bear me company,
For I have joyful news to tell thee of ;
My lord of Cornwall is a-coming over,
And will be at the court as soon as we.

Y. SPEN. : I knew the king would have him home again.

NIECE : If all things sort out, as I hope they will,
Thy service, Spenser, shall be thought upon.

Y. SPEN. : I humbly thank your ladyship.

NIECE : Come, lead the way : I long till I am there. [*Exeunt.*

Enter KING EDWARD, QUEEN ISABELLA, KENT, LANCASTER, *the younger* MORTIMER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, *and* ATTENDANTS.

K. EDW. : The wind is good ; I wonder why he stays :
I fear me he is wreck'd upon the sea.

Q. Isab. : Look, Lancaster, how passionate he is,
And still his mind runs on his minion !
Lan. : My lord,—
K. Edw. : How now ! what news ? is Gaveston arriv'd ?
Y. Mor. : Nothing but Gaveston ! what means your grace ?
You have matters of more weight to think upon :
The King of France sets foot in Normandy.
K. Edw. : A trifle ! we'll expel him when we please.
But tell me, Mortimer, what's thy device
Against the stately triumph we decreed ?
Y. Mor. : A homely one, my lord, not worth the telling.
K. Edw. : Pray thee, let me know it.
Y. Mor. : But, seeing you are so desirous, thus it is ;
A lofty cedar tree, fair flourishing,
On whose top branches kingly eagles perch,
And by the bark a canker creeps me up,
And gets unto the highest bough of all ;
The motto, *Æque tandem.*
K. Edw. : And what is yours, my Lord of Lancaster ?
Lan. : My lord, mine's more obscure than Mortimer's.
Pliny reports, there is a flying-fish
Which all the other fishes deadly hate,
And therefore, being pursu'd, it takes the air :
No sooner is it up, but there's a fowl
That seizeth it : this fish, my lord, I bear ;
The motto this, *Undique mors est.*
Kent : Proud Mortimer ! ungentle Lancaster !
Is this the love you bear your sovereign ?
Is this the fruit your reconcilement bears ?
Can you in words make show of amity,
And in your shields display your rancorous minds ?
What call you this but private libelling
Against the Earl of Cornwall and my brother ?
Q. Isab. : Sweet husband, be content ; they all love you.
K. Edw. : They love me not that hate my Gaveston.
I am that cedar ; shake me not too much ;
And you the eagles ; soar ye ne'er so high,
I have the jesses that will pull you down ;
And *Æque tandem* shall that canker cry
Unto the proudest peer of Britainy.
Thou that compar'st him to a flying-fish,
And threaten'st death whether he rise or fall,
'Tis not the hugest monster of the sea,
Nor foulest harpy, that shall swallow him.
Y. Mor. : If in his absence thus he favours him,
What will he do whenas he shall be present ?
Lan. : That shall we see : look, where his lordship comes !

Enter Gaveston.

K. Edw : My Gaveston !
Welcome to Tynmouth ! welcome to thy friend !
Thy absence made me droop and pine away ;

For, as the lovers of fair Danaë,
When she was lock'd up in a brazen tower,
Desir'd her more, and wax'd outrageous,
So did it fare with me : and now thy sight
Is sweeter far than was thy parting hence
Bitter and irksome to my sobbing heart.

GAV. : Sweet lord and king, your speech preventeth mine ;
Yet have I words left to express my joy ;
The shepherd, nipt with biting winter's rage,
Frolics not more to see the painted spring
Than I do to behold your majesty.

K. EDW. : Will none of you salute my Gaveston ?

LAN : Salute him ! yes.—Welcome, Lord Chamberlain !

Y. MOR. : Welcome is the good Earl of Cornwall !

WAR. : Welcome, Lord Governor of the Isle of Man !

PEM. : Welcome, Master Secretary !

KENT : Brother, do you hear them ?

K. EDW. : Still will these earls and barons use me thus ?

GAV. : My lord, I cannot brook these injuries.

Q. ISAB. : Ay me, poor soul, when these begin to jar ! [*Aside.*

K. EDW. : Return it to their throats ; I'll be thy warrant.

GAV. : Base, leaden earls, that glory in your birth,
Go sit at home, and eat your tenants' beef ;
And come not here to scoff at Gaveston,
Whose mounting thoughts did never creep so low
As to bestow a look on such as you.

LAN. : Yet I disdain not to do this for you.

[*Draws his sword, and offers to stab* GAVESTON.

K. EDW. : Treason ! treason ! where's the traitor ?

PEM. : Here, here !

K. EDW. : Convey hence Gaveston ; they'll murder him.

GAV. : The life of thee shall salve this foul disgrace.

Y. MOR. : Villain, thy life ! unless I miss mine aim.

[*Wounds* GAVESTON.

Q. ISAB. : Ah, furious Mortimer, what hast thou done.

Y. MOR. : No more than I would answer, were he slain.

[*Exit* GAVESTON *with* ATTENDANTS.

K. EDW. : Yes, more than thou canst answer, though he live :
Dear shall you both abide this riotous deed :
Out of my presence ! come not near the court.

Y. MOR. : I'll not be barr'd the court for Gaveston.

LAN. : We'll hale him by the ears unto the block.

K. EDW. : Look to your own heads ; his is sure enough.

WAR. : Look to your own crown, if you back him thus.

KENT : Warwick, these words do ill beseem thy years.

K. EDW. : Nay, all of them conspire to cross me thus :
But, if I live, I'll tread upon their heads
That think with high looks thus to tread me down.
Come, Edmund, let's away, and levy men :
'Tis war that must abate these barons' pride.

[*Exeunt* KING EDWARD, QUEEN ISABELLA, *and* KENT.

WAR. : Let's to our castles, for the king is mov'd.

Y. MOR. : Mov'd may he be, and perish in his wrath !

LAN. : Cousin, it is no dealing with him now ;
He means to make us stoop by force of arms :
And therefore let us jointly here protest
To prosecute that Gaveston to the death.
Y. MOR. : By heaven, the abject villain shall not live !
WAR. : I'll have his blood, or die in seeking it.
PEM. : The like oath Pembroke takes.
LAN. : And so doth Lancaster.
Now send our heralds to defy the king ;
And make the people swear to put him down.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Y. MOR. : Letters ! from whence ?
MES. : From Scotland, my lord. [*Giving letters to* MORTIMER.
LAN. : Why, how now, cousin ! how fare all our friends ?
Y. MOR. : My uncle's taken prisoner by the Scots.
LAN. : We'll have him ransom'd, man : be of good cheer.
Y. MOR. : They rate his ransom at five thousand pound.
Who should defray the money but the king,
Seeing he is taken prisoner in his wars ?
I'll to the king.
LAN. : Do, cousin, and I'll bear thee company.
WAR. : Meantime my Lord of Pembroke and myself
Will to Newcastle here, and gather head.
Y. MOR. : About it, then, and we will follow you.
LAN. : Be resolute and full of secrecy.
WAR. : I warrant you. [*Exit with* PEMBROKE.
Y. MOR. : Cousin, an if he will not ransom him,
I'll thunder such a peal into his ears
As never subject did unto his king.
LAN. : Content ; I'll bear my part.—Hollo ! who's there ?

Enter GUARD.

Y. MOR. : Ay, marry, such a guard as this doth well.
LAN. : Lead on the way.
GUARD : Whither will your lordships ?
Y. MOR. : Whither else but to the king ?
GUARD : His highness is dispos'd to be alone.
LAN. : Why, so he may ; but we will speak to him.
GUARD : You may not in, my lord.
Y. MOR. : May we not ?

Enter KING EDWARD *and* KENT.

K. EDW. : How now !
What noise is this ? who have we there ? is't you ? [*Going.*
Y. MOR. : Nay, stay, my lord ; I come to bring you news ;
Mine uncle's taken prisoner by the Scots.
K. EDW. : Then ransom him.
LAN. : 'Twas in your wars ; you should ransom him.
Y. MOR. : And you shall ransom him, or else—
KENT. : What, Mortimer, you will not threaten him ?

K. Edw. : Quiet yourself ; you shall have the broad seal,
To gather for him th[o]roughout the realm.
Lan. : Your minion Gaveston hath taught you this.
Y. Mor. : My lord, the family of the Mortimers
Are not so poor, but, would they sell their land,
'Twould levy men enough to anger you.
We never beg, but use such prayers as these.
K. Edw. : Shall I still be haunted thus ?
Y. Mor. : Nay, now you are here alone, I'll speak my mind.
Lan. : And so will I ; and then, my lord, farewell.
Y. Mor. : The idle triumphs, masks, lascivious shows,
And prodigal gifts bestow'd on Gaveston,
Have drawn thy treasury dry, and made thee weak ;
The murmuring commons, overstretched, break.
Lan. : Look for rebellion, look to be depos'd :
Thy garrisons are beaten out of France,
And, lame and poor, lie groaning at the gates ;
The wild Oneil, with swarms of Irish kerns,
Lives uncontroll'd within the English pale ;
Unto the walls of York the Scots make road,
And, unresisted, drive away rich spoils.
Y. Mor. : The haughty Dane commands the narrow seas,
While in the harbour ride thy ships unrigg'd.
Lan. : What foreign prince sends thee ambassadors ?
Y. Mor. : Who loves thee, but a sort of flatterers ?
Lan. : Thy gentle queen, sole sister to Valois,
Complains that thou hast left her all forlorn.
Y. Mor. : Thy court is naked, being bereft of those
That make a king seem glorious to the world,
I mean the peers, whom thou shouldst dearly love ;
Libels are cast again thee in the street ;
Ballads and rhymes made of thy overthrow.
Lan. : The northern borderers, seeing their houses burnt,
Their wives and children slain, run up and down,
Cursing the name of thee and Gaveston.
Y. Mor. : When wert thou in the field with banner spread,
But once ? and then thy soldiers march'd like players,
With garish robes, not armour ; and thyself,
Bedaub'd with gold, rode laughing at the rest,
Nodding and shaking of thy spangled crest,
Where women's favours hung like labels down.
Lan. : And thereof came it that the fleering Scots,
To England's high disgrace, have made this jig ;
Maids of England, sore may you mourn,
For your lemans you have lost at Bannocksbourn,—
With a heave and a ho !
What weeneth the king of England
So soon to have won Scotland !—
With a rombelow !
Y. Mor. : Wigmore shall fly, to set my uncle free.
Lan. : And, when 'tis gone, our swords shall purchase more.
If you be mov'd, revenge it as you can :
Look next to see us with our ensigns spread.

[*Exit with* Y. Mortimer.

K. Edw. : My swelling heart for very anger breaks :
How oft have I been baited by these peers,
And dare not be reveng'd, for their power is great !
Yet, shall the crowing of these cockerels
Affright a lion ? Edward, unfold thy paws,
And let their lives'-blood slake thy fury's hunger.
If I be cruel and grow tyrannous,
Now let them thank themselves, and rue too late.

Kent : My lord, I see your love to Gaveston
Will be the ruin of the realm and you,
For now the wrathful nobles threaten wars ;
And therefore, brother, banish him for ever.

K. Edw. : Art thou an enemy to my Gaveston ?

Kent : Ay ; and it grieves me that I favour'd him.

K. Edw. : Traitor, be gone ! whine thou with Mortimer.

Kent : So will I, rather than with Gaveston.

K. Edw. : Out of my sight, and trouble me no more !

Kent : No marvel though thou scorn thy noble peers,
When I thy brother am rejected thus.

K. Edw. : Away ! [*Exit* Kent.
Poor Gaveston, thou hast no friend but me !
Do what they can, we'll live in Tynmouth here ;
And, so I walk with him about the walls,
What care I though the earls begirt us round ?
Here comes she that is cause of all these jars.

Enter Queen Isabella, *with* Edward's Niece, *two* Ladies, Gaveston, Baldock, *and the younger* Spenser.

Q. Isab. : My lord, 'tis thought the earls are up in arms.

K. Edw. : Ay, and 'tis likewise thought you favour 'em.

Q. Isab. : Thus do you still suspect me without cause.

Niece : Sweet uncle, speak more kindly to the queen.

Gav. : My lord, dissemble with her ; speak her fair.

K. Edw. : Pardon me, sweet ; I forgot myself.

Q. Isab. : Your pardon is quickly got of Isabel.

K. Edw. : The younger Mortimer is grown so brave,
That to my face he threatens civil wars.

Gav. : Why do you not commit him to the Tower ?

K. Edw. : I dare not, for the people love him well.

Gav. : Why, then, we'll have him privily made away.

K. Edw. : Would Lancaster and he had both carous'd
A bowl of poison to each other's health !
But let them go, and tell me what are these.

Niece : Two of my father's servants whilst he liv'd :
May't please your grace to entertain them now.

K. Edw. : Tell me, where wast thou born ? what is thine arms ?

Bald. : My name is Baldock, and my gentry
I fetch from Oxford, not from heraldry.

K. Edw. : The fitter art thou, Baldock, for my turn.
Wait on me, and I'll see thou shalt not want.

Bald. : I humbly thank your majesty.

K. Edw. : Knowest thou him, Gaveston.

GAV. : Ay, my lord ;
His name is Spenser ; he is well allied :
For my sake let him wait upon your grace ;
Scarce shall you find a man of more desert.
K. EDW. : Then, Spenser, wait upon me for his sake :
I'll grace thee with a higher style ere long.
Y. SPEN. : No greater titles happen unto me
Than to be favour'd of your majesty !
K. EDW. : Cousin, this day shall be your marriage feast :—
And, Gaveston, think that I love thee well,
To wed thee to our niece, the only heir
Unto the Earl of Glocester late deceas'd.
GAV. : I know, my lord, many will stomach me ;
But I respect neither their love nor hate.
K. EDW. : The headstrong barons shall not limit me ;
He that I list to favour shall be great.
Come, let's away ; and, when the marriage ends,
Have at the rebels and their complices ! [*Exeunt.*

Enter KENT, LANCASTER, *the younger* MORTIMER, WARWICK, PEMBROKE, *and others.*

KENT : My lords, of love to this our native land,
I come to join with you, and leave the king ;
And in your quarrel, and the realm's behoof,
Will be the first that shall adventure life.
LAN. : I fear me, you are sent of policy,
To undermine us with a show of love.
WAR. : He is your brother ; therefore have we cause
To cast the worst, and doubt of your revolt.
KENT : Mine honour shall be hostage of my truth :
If that will not suffice, farewell, my lords.
Y. MOR. : Stay, Edmund : never was Plantagenet
False of his word ; and therefore trust we thee.
PEM. : But what's the reason you should leave him now ?
KENT : I have inform'd the Earl of Lancaster.
LAN. : And it sufficeth. Now, my lords, know this,
That Gaveston is secretly arriv'd,
And here in Tynmouth frolics with the king.
Let us with these our followers scale the walls,
And suddenly surprise them unawares.
Y. MOR. : I'll give the onset.
WAR. : And I'll follow thee.
Y. MOR. : This tatter'd ensign of my ancestors,
Which swept the desert shore of that Dead Sea
Whereof we got the name of Mortimer,
Will I advance upon this castle['s] walls—
Drums, strike alarum, raise them from their sport,
And ring aloud the knell of Gaveston !
LAN. : None be so hardy as to touch the king ;
But neither spare you Gaveston nor his friends. [*Exeunt.*

Enter, severally, KING EDWARD *and the younger* SPENSER.

K. EDW. : O, tell me, Spenser, where is Gaveston ?

Y. SPEN. : I fear me he is slain, my gracious lord.
K. EDW. : No, here he comes ; now let them spoil and kill.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA, KING EDWARD'S NIECE, GAVESTON, *and* NOBLES.

Fly, fly, my lords ; the earls have got the hold ;
Take shipping, and away to Scarborough :
Spenser and I will post away by land.
GAV. : O, stay, my lord ! they will not injure you.
K. EDW. : I will not trust them. Gaveston, away !
GAV. : Farewell, my lord.
K. EDW. : Lady, farewell.
NIECE : Farewell, sweet uncle, till we meet again.
K. EDW. : Farewell, sweet Gaveston ; and farewell, niece.
Q. ISAB. : No farewell to poor Isabel thy queen ?
K. EDW. : Yes, yes, for Mortimer your lover's sake.
Q. ISAB. : Heavens can witness, I love none but you.

[*Exeunt all except* QUEEN ISABELLA.

From my embracements thus he breaks away.
O, that mine arms could close this isle about,
That I might pull him to me where I would !
Or that these tears, that drizzle from mine eyes,
Had power to mollify his stony heart,
That, when I had him, we might never part !

Enter LANCASTER, WARWICK, *the younger* MORTIMER, *and others. Alarums within.*

LAN. : I wonder how he scap'd.
Y. MOR. : Who's this ? the queen !
Q. ISAB. : Ay, Mortimer, the miserable queen,
Whose pining heart her inward sighs have blasted,
And body with continual mourning wasted :
These hands are tir'd with haling of my lord
From Gaveston, from wicked Gaveston ;
And all in vain ; for, when I speak him fair,
He turns away, and smiles upon his minion.
Y. MOR. : Cease to lament, and tell us where's the king ?
Q. ISAB. : What would you with the king ? is't him you seek ?
LAN. : No, madam, but that cursed Gaveston :
Far be it from the thought of Lancaster
To offer violence to his sovereign !
We would but rid the realm of Gaveston :
Tell us where he remains, and he shall die.
Q. ISAB. : He's gone by water unto Scarborough :
Pursue him quickly, and he cannot scape ;
The king hath left him, and his train is small.
WAR. : Forslow no time, sweet Lancaster ; let's march.
Y. MOR. : How comes it that the king and he is parted ?
Q. ISAB. : That thus your army, going several ways,
Might be of lesser force, and with the power
That he intendeth presently to raise,
Be easily suppress'd : therefore be gone.
Y. MOR. : Here in the river rides a Flemish hoy :
Let's all aboard, and follow him amain.

LAN. : The wind that bears him hence will fill our sails ;
Come, come, aboard ! 'tis but an hour's sailing.
Y. MOR. : Madam, stay you within this castle here.
Q. ISAB. : No, Mortimer ; I'll to my lord the king.
Y. MOR. : Nay, rather sail with us to Scarborough.
Q. ISAB. : You know the king is so suspicious
As, if he hear I have but talk'd with you,
Mine honour will be call'd in question ;
And therefore, gentle Mortimer be gone.
Y. MOR. : Madam, I cannot stay to answer you :
But think of Mortimer as he deserves.

[*Exeunt all except* QUEEN ISABELLA.

Q. ISAB. : So well hast thou deserv'd, sweet Mortimer,
As Isabel could live with thee for ever.
In vain I look for love at Edward's hand,
Whose eyes are fix'd on none but Gaveston.
Yet once more I'll importune him with prayer :
If he be strange, and not regard my words,
My son and I will over into France,
And to the king my brother there complain
How Gaveston hath robb'd me of his love :
But yet, I hope, my sorrows will have end,
And Gaveston this blessed day be slain. [*Exit.*

Enter GAVESTON, *pursued.*

GAV. : Yet, lusty lords, I have escap'd your hands,
Your threats, your 'larums, and your hot pursuits ;
And, though divorced from King Edward's eyes,
Yet liveth Pierce of Gaveston unsurpris'd,
Breathing in hope (malgrado all your beards,
That muster rebels thus against your king)
To see his royal sovereign once again.

Enter WARWICK, LANCASTER, PEMBROKE, *the younger* MORTIMER, SOLDIERS, JAMES, *and other* ATTENDANTS *of* PEMBROKE.

WAR. : Upon him, soldiers ! take away his weapons !
Y. MOR. : Thou proud disturber of thy country's peace,
Corrupter of thy king, cause of these broils,
Base flatterer, yield ! and, were it not for shame,
Shame and dishonour to a soldier's name,
Upon my weapon's point here shouldst thou fall,
And welter in thy gore.
LAN. : Monster of men,
That, like the Greekish strumpet, train'd to arms
And bloody wars so many valiant knights,
Look for no other fortune, wretch, than death !
King Edward is not here to buckler thee.
WAR. : Lancaster, why talk'st thou to the slave ?—
Go, soldiers, take him hence ; for, by my sword,
His head shall off.—Gaveston, short warning
Shall serve thy turn : it is our country's cause
That here severely we will execute
Upon thy person.—Hang him at a bough.

GAV. : My lord,—
WAR. : Soldiers, have him away.—
But, for thou wert the favourite of a king,
Thou shalt have so much honour at our hands.
GAV. : I thank you all, my lords : then I perceive
That heading is one, and hanging is the other,
And death is all.

Enter ARUNDEL.

LAN. : How now, my Lord of Arundel !
ARUN. : My lords, King Edward greets you all by me.
WAR. : Arundel, say your message.
ARUN. : His majesty, hearing that you had taken Gaveston,
Entreateth you by me, yet but he may
See him before he dies ; for why, he says,
And sends you word, he knows that die he shall ;
And, if you gratify his grace so far,
He will be mindful of the courtesy.
WAR. : How now !
GAV. : Renowmed Edward, how thy name
Revives poor Gaveston !
WAR. : No, it needeth not :
Arundel, we will gratify the king
In other matters ; he must pardon us in this.—
Soldiers, away with him !
GAV. : Why, my Lord of Warwick,
Will now these short delays beget my hopes ?
I know it, lords, it is life you aim at,
Yet grant King Edward this.
Y. MOR. : Shalt thou appoint
What we shall grant ?—Soldiers, away with him !—
Thus we'll gratify the king ;
We'll send his head by thee ; let him bestow
His tears on that, for that is all he gets
Of Gaveston, or else his senseless trunk.
LAN. : Not so, my lord, lest he bestow more cost
In burying him than he hath ever earn'd.
ARUN. : My lords, it is his majesty's request,
And in the honour of a king he swears,
He will but talk with him, and send him back.
WAR. : When, can you tell ? Arundel, no ; we wot,
He that the care of his realm remits,
And drives his nobles to these exigents
For Gaveston, will, if he seize him once,
Violate any promise to possess him.
ARUN. : Then, if you will not trust his grace in keep,
My lords, I will be pledge for his return.
Y. MOR. : 'Tis honourable in thee to offer this ;
But, for we know thou art a noble gentleman,
We will not wrong thee so,
To make away a true man for a thief.
GAV. : How mean'st thou, Mortimer ? that is over-base.
Y. MOR. : Away, base groom, robber of king's renown !
Question with my companions and mates.

PEM. : My Lord Mortimer, and you, my lords, each one,
To gratify the king's request therein,
Touching the sending of this Gaveston,
Because his majesty so earnestly
Desires to see the man before his death,
I will upon mine honour undertake
To carry him, and bring him back again ;
Provided this, that you, my Lord of Arundel,
Will join with me.

WAR. : Pembroke, what wilt thou do ?
Cause yet more bloodshed ? is it not enough
That we have taken him, but must we now
Leave him on " Had I wist," and let him go ?

PEM. : My lords, I will not over-woo your honours :
But, if you dare trust Pembroke with the prisoner,
Upon mine oath, I will return him back.

ARUN. : My Lord of Lancaster, what say you in this ?

LAN. : Why, I say, let him go on Pembroke's word.

PEM. : And you, Lord Mortimer ?

Y. MOR. : How say you, my Lord of Warwick ?

WAR. : Nay, do your pleasures : I know how 'twill prove.

PEM. : Then give him me.

GAV. : Sweet sovereign, yet I come
To see thee ere I die !

WAR. : Yet not perhaps,
If Warwick's wit and policy prevail. [*Aside.*

Y. MOR. : My Lord of Pembroke, we deliver him you :
Return him on your honour.—Sound, away !

[*Exeunt all except* PEMBROKE, ARUNDEL, GAVESTON, JAMES, *and other* ATTENDANTS *of* PEMBROKE.

PEM. : My lord, you shall go with me :
My house is not far hence ; out of the way
A little ; but our men shall go along.
We that have pretty wenches to our wives,
Sir, must not come so near to balk their lips.

ARUN. : 'Tis very kindly spoke, my Lord of Pembroke :
Your honour hath an adamant of power
To draw a prince.

PEM. : So, my lord.—Come, hither, James :
I do commit this Gaveston to thee ;
Be thou this night his keeper ; in the morning
We will discharge thee of thy charge : be gone.

GAV. : Unhappy Gaveston, whither go'st thou now ?
[*Exit with* JAMES *and other* ATTENDANTS *of* PEMBROKE.

HORSE-BOY : My lord, we'll quickly be at Cobham. [*Exeunt.*

Enter GAVESTON *mourning*, JAMES, *and other* ATTENDANTS *of* PEMBROKE.

GAV. : O treacherous Warwick, thus to wrong thy friend !

JAMES : I see it is your life these arms pursue.

GAV. : Weaponless must I fall, and die in bands ?
O, must this day be period of my life,

Centre of all my bliss? And ye be men,
Speed to the king.

Enter WARWICK *and* SOLDIERS.

WAR. : My Lord of Pembroke's men,
Strive you no longer : I will have that Gaveston.

JAMES : Your lordship doth dishonour to yourself,
And wrong our lord, your honourable friend.

WAR. : No, James, it is my country's cause I follow.—
Go, take the villain : soldiers, come away ;
We'll make quick work.—Commend me to your master,
My friend, and tell him that I watch'd it well.—
Come, let thy shadow parley with King Edward.

GAV. : Treacherous earl, shall not I see the king?

WAR. : The king of heaven perhaps, no other king.—
Away! [*Exeunt* WARWICK *and* SOLDIERS *with* GAVESTON.

JAMES : Come, fellows : it booted not for us to strive :
We will in haste go certify our lord. [*Exeunt.*

Enter KING EDWARD, *the younger* SPENSER, BALDOCK, NOBLEMEN *of the king's side, and* SOLDIERS *with drums and fifes.*

K. EDW. : I long to hear an answer from the barons
Touching my friend, my dearest Gaveston.
Ah, Spenser, not the riches of my realm
Can ransom him! ah, he is mark'd to die!
I know the malice of the younger Mortimer ;
Warwick I know is rough, and Lancaster
Inexorable ; and I shall never see
My lovely Pierce of Gaveston again :
The barons overbear me with their pride.

Y. SPEN. : Were I King Edward, England's sovereign,
Son to the lovely Eleanor of Spain,
Great Edward Longshanks' issue, would I bear
These braves, this rage, and suffer uncontroll'd
These barons thus to beard me in my land,
In mine own realm? My lord, pardon my speech :
Did you retain your father's magnanimity,
Did you regard the honour of your name,
You would not suffer thus your majesty
Be counterbuff'd of your nobility.
Strike off their heads, and let them preach on poles :
No doubt, such lessons they will teach the rest,
As by their preachments they will profit much,
And learn obedience to their lawful king.

K. EDW. : Yes, gentle Spenser, we have been too mild,
Too kind to them ; but now have drawn our sword,
And, if they send me not my Gaveston,
We'll steel in on their crest[s], and poll their tops.

BALD. : This haught resolve becomes your majesty,
Not to be tied to their affection,

As though your highness were a school-boy still,
And must be aw'd and govern'd like a child.

Enter the elder SPENSER *with his truncheon, and* SOLDIERS.

E. SPEN. : Long live my sovereign, the noble Edward,
In peace triumphant, fortunate in wars !

K. EDW. : Welcome, old man : com'st thou in Edward's aid ?
Then tell thy prince of whence and what thou art.

E. SPEN. : Low, with a band of bow-men and of pikes,
Brown bills and targeteers, four hundred strong,
Sworn to defend King Edward's royal right,
I come in person to your majesty,
Spenser, the father of Hugh Spenser there,
Bound to your highness everlastingly
For favour done, in him, unto us all.

K. EDW. : Thy father, Spenser ?

Y. SPEN. : True, an it like your grace,
That pours, in lieu of all your goodness shown,
His life, my lord, before your princely feet.

K. EDW. : Welcome ten thousand times, old man, again !
Spenser, this love, this kindness to thy king,
Argues thy noble mind and disposition.
Spenser, I here create thee Earl of Wiltshire,
And daily will enrich thee with our favour,
That, as the sunshine, shall reflect o'er thee.
Beside, the more to manifest our love,
Because we hear Lord Bruce doth sell his land,
And that the Mortimers are in hand withal,
Thou shalt have crowns of us t'outbid the barons ;
And, Spenser, spare them not, lay it on.—
Soldiers, a largess, and thrice-welcome all !

Y. SPEN. : My lord, here comes the queen.

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA, PRINCE EDWARD, *and* LEVUNE.

K. EDW. : Madam, what news ?

Q. ISAB. : News of dishonour, lord, and discontent.
Our friend Levune, faithful and full of trust,
Informeth us, by letters and by words,
That Lord Valois our brother, King of France,
Because your highness hath been slack in homage,
Hath seized Normandy into his hands :
These be the letters, this the messenger.

K. EDW. : Welcome, Levune.—Tush, Sib, if this be all,
Valois and I will soon be friends again.—
But to my Gaveston : shall I never see,
Never behold thee now !—Madam, in this matter
We will employ you and your little son ;
You shall go parley with the King of France.—
Boy, see you bear you bravely to the king,
And do your message with a majesty.

P. Edw. : Commit not to my youth things of more weight
Than fits a prince so young as I to bear ;
And fear not, lord and father,—heaven's great beams
On Atlas' shoulder shall not lie more safe
Than shall your charge committed to my trust.
Q. Isab. : Ah, boy, this towardness makes thy mother fear
Thou are not mark'd to many days on earth !
K. Edw. : Madam, we will that you will speed be shipp'd,
And this our son ; Levune shall follow you
With all the haste we can despatch him hence.
Choose of our lords to bear you company ;
And go in peace ; leave us in wars at home.
Q. Isab. : Unnatural wars, where subjects brave their king :
God end them once !—My lord, I take my leave,
To make my preparation for France. [*Exit with* Prince Edward.

Enter Arundel.

K. Edw. : What, Lord Arundel, dost thou come alone ?
Arun. : Yea, my good lord, for Gaveston is dead.
K. Edw. : Ah, traitors, have they put my friend to death ?
Tell me, Arundel, died he ere thou cam'st,
Or didst thou see my friend to take his death ?
Arun. : Neither, my lord ; for, as he was surpris'd,
Begirt with weapons and with enemies round,
I did your highness' message to them all,
Demanding him of them, entreating rather,
And said, upon the honour of my name,
That I would undertake to carry him
Unto your highness, and to bring him back.
K. Edw. : And, tell me, would the rebels deny me that ?
Y. Spen. : Proud recreants !
K. Edw. : Yea, Spenser, traitors all !
Arun. : I found them at the first inexorable,
The Earl of Warwick would not bide the hearing,
Mortimer hardly ; Pembroke and Lancaster
Spake least ; and when they flatly had denied,
Refusing to receive me pledge for him,
The Earl of Pembroke mildly thus bespake ;
" My lords, because our sovereign sends for him,
And promiseth he shall be safe return'd,
I will this undertake, to have him hence,
And see him re-deliver'd to your hands."
K. Edw. : Well, and how fortunes [it] that he came not ?
Y. Spen. : Some treason or some villany was cause.
Arun. : The Earl of Warwick seiz'd him on his way ;
For, being deliver'd unto Pembroke's men,
Their lord rode home, thinking his prisoner safe ;
But, ere he came, Warwick in ambush lay,
And bare him to his death ; and in a trench
Strake off his head, and march'd unto the camp.
Y. Spen. : A bloody part, flatly 'gainst law of arms !
K. Edw. : O, shall I speak, or shall I sigh and die !

Y. Spen. : My lord, refer your vengeance to the sword
Upon these barons ; hearten up your men ;
Let them not unreveng'd murder your friends :
Advance your standard, Edward, in the field,
And march to fire them from their starting-holes.

K. Edw. (kneeling) : By earth, the common mother of us all,
By heaven, and all the moving orbs thereof,
By this right hand, and by my father's sword,
And all the honours 'longing to my crown,
I will have heads and lives for him as many
As I have manors, castles, towns, and towers !— [*Rises.*
Treacherous Warwick ! traitorous Mortimer !
If I be England's king, in lakes of gore
Your headless trunks, your bodies will I trail,
That you may drink your fill, and quaff in blood,
And stain my royal standard with the same,
That so my bloody colours may suggest
Remembrance of revenge immortally
On your accursed traitorous progeny,
You villains that have slain my Gaveston—
And in this place of honour and of trust,
Spenser, sweet Spenser, I adopt thee here ;
And merely of our love we do create thee
Earl of Glocester and Lord Chamberlain,
Despite of times, despite of enemies.

Y. Spen. : My lord, here's a messenger from the barons
Desires access unto your majesty.

K. Edw. : Admit him near.

Enter Herald *with his coat of arms.*

Her. : Long live King Edward, England's lawful lord !

K. Edw. : So wish not they, I wis, that sent thee hither :
Thou com'st from Mortimer and his complices :
A ranker rout of rebels never was.
Well, say thy message.

Her. : The barons, up in arms, by me salute
Your highness with long life and happiness ;
And bid me say, as plainer to your grace,
That if without effusion of blood
You will this grief have ease and remedy,
That from your princely person you remove
This Spenser, as a putrefying branch
That deads the royal vine, whose golden leaves
Empale your princely head, your diadem ;
Whose brightness such pernicious upstarts dim,
Say they, and lovingly advise your grace
To cherish virtue and nobility,
And have old servitors in high esteem,
And shake off smooth dissembling flatterers :
This granted, they, their honours, and their lives,
Are to your highness vow'd and consecrate.

Y. Spen. : Ah, traitors, will they still display their pride ?

K. Edw. : Away ! tarry no answer, but be gone !—
Rebels, will they appoint their sovereign
His sports, his pleasures, and his company ?—
Yet, ere thou go, see how I do divorce
[*Embraces young* Spenser.
Spenser from me. Now get thee to thy lords,
And tell them I will come to chastise them
For murdering Gaveston : hie thee, get thee gone !
Edward, with fire and sword, follows at thy heels.
[*Exit* Herald.
My lord[s], perceive you how these rebels swell ?—
Soldiers, good hearts ! defend your sovereign's right,
For, now, even now, we march to make them stoop.
Away !
[*Exeunt Alarums, excursions, a great fight, and a retreat sounded, within.*

Re-enter King Edward, *the elder* Spenser, *the younger* Spenser, Baldock, *and* Noblemen *of the king's side.*

K. Edw. : Why do we sound retreat ? upon them, lords !
This day I shall your vengeance with my sword
On those proud rebels that are up in arms,
And do confront and countermand their king.
Y. Spen. : I doubt it not, my lord ; right will prevail.
E. Spen. : 'Tis not amiss, my liege, for either part
To breathe a while ; our men, with sweat and dust
All chok'd well near, begin to faint for heat ;
And this retire refresheth horse and man.
Y. Spen. : Here come the rebels.

Enter the young Mortimer, Lancaster, Warwick, Pembroke, *and others.*

Y. Mor. : Look, Lancaster, yonder is Edward
Among his flatterers.
Lan. : And there let him be,
Till he pay dearly for their company.
War. : And shall, or Warwick's sword shall smite in vain.
K. Edw. : What, rebels, do you shrink and sound retreat ?
Y. Mor. : No, Edward, no ; thy flatterers faint and fly.
Lan. : They'd best betimes forsake thee and their trains,
For they'll betray thee, traitors as they are.
Y. Spen. : Traitor on thy face, rebellious Lancaster !
Pem. : Away, base upstart ! brav'st thou nobles thus ?
E. Spen. : A noble attempt and honourable deed,
Is it not, trow ye, to assemble aid
And levy arms against your lawful king ?
K. Edw. : For which, ere long, their heads shall satisfy
T' appease the wrath of their offended king.
Y. Mor. : Then, Edward, thou wilt fight it to the last,
And rather bathe thy sword in subjects' blood
Than banish that pernicious company ?
K. Edw. : Ay, traitors all, rather than thus be brav'd,
Make England's civil towns huge heaps of stones,
And ploughs to go about our palace-gates.

WAR. : A desperate and unnatural resolution !—
Alarum to the fight !
Saint George for England, and the barons' right !

K. EDW. : Saint George for England, and King Edward's right !
[*Alarums. Exeunt the two parties severally.*

Enter KING EDWARD *and his followers, with the* BARONS *and* KENT *captive.*

K. EDW. : Now, lusty lords, now not by chance of war,
But justice of the quarrel and the cause,
Vail'd is your pride : methinks you hang the heads ;
But we'll advance them, traitors : now 'tis time
To be aveng'd on you for all your braves,
And for the murder of my dearest friend,
To whom right well you knew our soul was knit,
Good Pierce of Gaveston, my sweet favourite :
Ah, rebels, recreants, you made him away !

KENT : Brother, in regard of thee and of thy land,
Did they remove that flatterer from thy throne.

K. EDW. : So, sir, you have spoke : away, avoid our presence !
[*Exit* KENT.
Accursed wretches, was't in regard of us,
When we had sent our messenger to request
He might be spar'd to come to speak with us,
And Pembroke undertook for his return,
That thou, proud Warwick, watch'd the prisoner,
Poor Pierce, and headed him 'gainst law of arms ?
For which thy head shall overlook the rest
As much as thou in rage outwent'st the rest.

WAR. : Tyrant, I scorn thy threats and menaces ;
It is but temporal that thou canst inflict.

LAN. : The worst is death ; and better die to live
Than live in infamy under such a king.

K. EDW. : Away with them, my lord of Winchester !
These lusty leaders, Warwick and Lancaster,
I charge you roundly, off with both their heads !
Away !

WAR. : Farewell, vain world !

LAN. : Sweet Mortimer, farewell !

Y. MOR. : England, unkind to thy nobility.
Groan for this grief ! behold how thou art maim'd !

K. EDW. : Go, take that haughty Mortimer to the Tower ;
There see him safe bestow'd ; and, for the rest,
Do speedy execution on them all.
Be gone !

Y. MOR. : What, Mortimer, can ragged stony walls
Immure thy virtue that aspires to heaven ?
No, Edward, England's scourge, it may not be ;
Mortimer's hope surmounts his fortune far.
[*The captive Barons are led off.*

K. EDW. : Sound, drums and trumpets ! March with me, my friends.
Edward this day hath crown'd him king anew.
[*Exeunt all except the younger* SPENSER, LEVUNE, *and* BALDOCK.

Y. SPEN. : Levune, the trust that we repose in thee
Begets the quiet of King Edward's land :
Therefore be gone in haste, and with advice
Bestow that treasure on the lords of France,
That, therewith all enchanted, like the guard
That suffer'd Jove to pass in showers of gold
To Danaë, all aid may be denied
To Isabel the queen, that now in France
Makes friends, to cross the seas with her young son,
And step into his father's regiment.
LEVUNE : That's it these barons and the subtle queen
Long levell'd at.
BAL. : Yea, but, Levune, thou seest,
These barons lay their heads on blocks together :
What they intend, the hangman frustrates clean.
LEVUNE : Have you no doubt, my lords, I'll clap so close
Among the lords of France with England's gold,
That Isabel shall make her plaints in vain,
And France shall be obdurate with her tears.
Y. SPEN. : Then make for France amain ; Levune, away !
Proclaim King Edward's wars and victories. [*Exeunt.*

Enter KENT.

KENT : Fair blows the wind for France : blow, gentle gale,
Till Edmund be arriv'd for England's good !
Nature, yield to my country's cause in this !
A brother ? no, a butcher of thy friends !
Proud Edward, dost thou banish me thy presence ?
But I'll to France, and cheer the wronged queen,
And certify what Edward's looseness is.
Unnatural king, to slaughter nobleman
And cherish flatterers ! Mortimer, I stay
Thy sweet escape. Stand gracious, gloomy night,
To his device !

Enter the younger MORTIMER *disguised.*

Y. MOR. : Holla ! who walketh there ?
Is't you, my lord ?
KENT : Mortimer, 'tis I.
But hath thy portion wrought so happily ?
Y. MOR. : It hath, my lord : the warders all asleep,
I thank them, gave me leave to pass in peace.
But hath your grace got shipping unto France ?
KENT : Fear it not. [*Exeunt.*

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA *and* PRINCE EDWARD.

Q. ISAB. : Ah, boy, our friends do fail us all in France !
The lords are cruel, and the king unkind.
What shall we do ?
P. EDW. : Madam, return to England,
And please my father well ; and then a fig
For all my uncle's friendship here in France !

I warrant you, I'll win his highness quickly ;
'A loves me better than a thousand Spensers.
Q. Isab. : Ah, boy, thou art deceiv'd, at least in this,
To think that we can yet be tun'd together !
No, no, we jar too far.—Unkind Valois !
Unhappy Isabel, when France rejects,
Whither, O, whither dost thou bend thy steps ?

Enter Sir John of Hainault.

Sir J. : Madam, what cheer ?
Q. Isab. : Ah, good Sir John of Hainault,
Never so cheerless nor so far distrest !
Sir J. : I hear, sweet lady, of the king's unkindness :
But droop not, madam ; noble minds contemn
Despair. Will your grace with me to Hainault,
And there stay time's advantage with your son ?—
How say you, my lord ! will you go with your friends,
And shake off all our fortunes equally ?
P. Edw. : So pleaseth the queen my mother, me it likes :
The king of England, not the court of France,
Shall have me from my gracious mother's side,
Till I be strong enough to break a staff ;
And then have at the proudest Spenser's head !
Sir J. : Well said, my lord !
Q. Isab. : O my sweet heart, how do I moan thy wrongs,
Yet triumph in the hope of thee, my joy !—
Ah, sweet Sir John, even to the utmost verge
Of Europe, on the shore of Tanais,
Will we with thee to Hainault—so we will :
The marquis is a noble gentleman ;
His grace, I dare presume, will welcome me.—
But who are these ?

Enter Kent *and the younger* Mortimer.

Kent : Madam, long may you live
Much happier than your friends in England do !
Q. Isab. : Lord Edmund and Lord Mortimer alive !
Welcome to France ! the news was here, my lord,
That you were dead, or very near your death.
Y. Mor. : Lady, the last was truest of the twain :
But Mortimer, reserv'd for better hap,
Hath shaken off the thraldom of the Tower,
And lives t' advance your standard, good my lord.
P. Edw. : How mean you, and the king my father lives ?
No, my Lord Mortimer, not I, I trow.
Q. Isab. : Not, son ! why not ? I would it were no worse !—
But, gentle lords, friendless we are in France.
Y. Mor. : Monsieur Le Grand, a noble friend of yours,
Told us, at our arrival, all the news,—
How hard the nobles, how unkind the king
Hath show'd himself : but, madam, right makes room
Where weapons want ; and, though a many friends
Are made away, as Warwick, Lancaster,

And others of our part and faction,
Yet have we friends, assure your grace, in England,
Would cast up caps, and clap their hands for joy,
To see us there, appointed for our foes.

KENT : Would all were well, and Edward well reclaim'd,
For England's honour, peace, and quietness !

Y. MOR. : But by the sword, my lord, 't must be deserv'd :
The king will ne'er forsake his flatterers.

SIR J. : My lords of England, sith th' ungentle king
Of France refuseth to give aid of arms
To this distressed queen, his sister, here,
Go you with her to Hainault : doubt ye not
We will find comfort, money, men, and friends,
Ere long to bid the English king a base.—
How say'st, young prince, what think you of the match ?

P. EDW. : I think King Edward will outrun us all.

Q. ISAB. : Nay, son, not so ; and you must not discourage
Your friends that are so forward in your aid.

KENT : Sir John of Hainault, pardon us, I pray :
These comforts that you give our woful queen
Bind us in kindness all at your command.

Q. ISAB. : Yea, gentle brother :—and the God of heaven
Prosper your happy motion, good Sir John !

Y. MOR. : This noble gentleman, forward in arms,
Was born, I see, to be our anchor-hold.—
Sir John of Hainault, be it thy renown,
That England's queen and nobles in distress
Have been by thee restor'd and comforted.

SIR J. : Madam, along ; and you, my lord[s], with me,
That England's peers may Hainault's welcome see. [*Exeunt.*

Enter KING EDWARD, ARUNDEL, *the elder* SPENSER, *the younger* SPENSER, *and others.*

K. EDW. : Thus, after many threats of wrathful war,
Triumpheth England's Edward with his friends,
And triumph Edward with his friends uncontroll'd !—
My Lord of Glocester, do you hear the news ?

Y. SPEN. : What news, my lord ?

K. EDW. : Why, man, they say there is great execution
Done through the realm.—My Lord of Arundel,
You have the note, have you not ?

ARUN. : From the Lieutenant of the Tower, my lord.

K. EDW. : I pray, let us see it. [*Takes the note from* ARUNDEL.
—What have we there ?—
Read it, Spenser.
[*Gives the note to young* SPENSER, *who reads their names.*
Why, so : they bark'd apace a month ago ;
Now, on my life, they'll neither bark nor bite.
Now, sirs, the news from France ? Glocester, I trow,
The lords of France love England's gold so well
As Isabella gets no aid from thence.
What now remains ? have you proclam'd, my lord,
Reward for them can bring in Mortimer ?

Y. Spen. : My lord, we have ; and, if he be in England,
A will be had ere long, I doubt it not.
K. Edw. : If, dost thou say ? Spenser, as true as death,
He is in England's ground : our port-masters
Are not so careless of their king's command.

Enter a Messenger.

How now ! what news with thee ? from whence come these ?
Mess. : Letters, my lord, and tidings forth of France :
To you, my Lord of Glocester, from Levune.
[*Gives letters to young* Spenser.
K. Edw. : Read.
Y. Spen. (*reading*) : *My duty to your honour promised, etc., I have, according to instructions in that behalf, dealt with the King of France and his lords, and effected that the queen, all discontented and discomforted, is gone : whither, if you ask, with Sir John of Hainault, brother to the marquis, into Flanders. With them are gone Lord Edmund and the Lord Mortimer, having in their company divers of your nation, and others ; and, as constant report goeth, they intend to give King Edward battle in England, sooner than he can look for them. This is all the news of import.*
Your honour's in all service,
Levune.
K. Edw. : Ah, villains, hath that Mortimer escap'd ?
With him is Edmund gone associate ?
And will Sir John of Hainault lead the round ?
Welcome, o' God's name, madam, and your son !
England shall welcome you and all your rout.
Gallop apace, bright Phœbus, through the sky ;
And, dusky Night, in rusty iron car,
Between you both shorten the time, I pray,
That I may see that most desired day,
When we may meet these traitors in the field !
Ah, nothing grieves me, but my little boy
Is thus misled to countenance their ills !
Come, friends, to Bristow, there to make us strong :
And, winds, as equal be to bring them in,
As you injurious were to bear them forth ! [*Exeunt.*

Enter Queen Isabella, Prince Edward, Kent, *the younger* Mortimer, *and* Sir John of Hainault.

Q. Isab. : Now, lords, our loving friends and countrymen,
Welcome to England all, with prosperous winds !
Our kindest friends in Belgia have we left,
To cope with friends at home ; a heavy case
When force to force is knit, and sword and glaive
In civil broils make kin and countrymen
Slaughter themselves in others, and their sides
With their own weapons gor'd ! But what's the help ?
Misgovern'd kings are cause of all this wreck ;
And, Edward, thou art one among them all,
Whose looseness hath betray'd thy land to spoil,
Who made the channel overflow with blood
Of thine own people : patron shouldst thou be ;
But thou—

Y. Mor. : Nay, madam, if you be a warrior,
You must not grow so passionate in speeches.—
Lords, sith that we are, by sufferance of heaven,
Arriv'd and armed in this prince's right,
Here for our country's cause swear we to him
All homage, fealty, and forwardness ;
And for the open wrongs and injuries
Edward hath done to us, his queen, and land,
We come in arms to wreck it with the sword ;
That England's queen in peace may repossess
Her dignities and honours ; and withal
We may remove these flatterers from the king
That havock England's wealth and treasury.
Sir J. : Sound trumpets, my lord, and forward let us march.
Edward will think we come to flatter him.
Kent : I would he never had been flatter'd more ! [*Exeunt.*

Enter King Edward, Baldock, *and the younger* Spenser.

Y. Spen. : Fly fly, my lord ! the queen is overstrong ;
Her friends do multiply, and yours do fail.
Shape we our course to Ireland, there to breathe.
K. Edw. : What, was I born to fly and run away,
And leave the Mortimers conquerors behind ?
Give me my horse, and let's reinforce our troops.
And in this bed of honour die with fame.
Bald. : O, no, my lord ! this princely resolution
Fits not the time : away ! we are pursu'd. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Kent, *with a sword and target.*

Kent : This way he fled ; but I am come too late.
Edward, alas, my heart relents for thee !
Proud traitor, Mortimer, why dost thou chase
Thy lawful king, thy sovereign, with thy sword ?
Vile wretch, and why hast thou, of all unkind,
Borne arms against thy brother and thy king ?
Rain showers of vengeance on my cursed head,
Thou God, to whom in justice it belongs
To punish this unnatural revolt !
Edward, this Mortimer aims at thy life :
O, fly him, then ! But, Edmund, calm this rage ;
Dissemble, or thou diest ; for Mortimer
And Isabel do kiss, while they conspire :
And yet she bears a face of love, forsooth :
Fie on that love that hatcheth death and hate !
Edmund, away ! Bristow to Longshanks' blood
Is false ; be not found single for suspect :
Proud Mortimer pries near into thy walks.

Enter Queen Isabella, Prince Edward, *the younger* Mortimer, *and* Sir John of Hainault.

Q. Isab. : Successful battle gives the God of kings
To them that fight in right, and fear his wrath.

Since, then, successfully we have prevail'd,
Thanked be heaven's great architect, and you !
Ere farther we proceed, my noble lords,
We here create our well-beloved son,
Of love and care unto his royal person,
Lord Warden of the realm ; and, sith the Fates
Have made his father so infortunate,
Deal you, my lords, in this, my loving lords,
As to your wisdoms fittest seems in all.

KENT : Madam, without offence if I may ask
How will you deal with Edward in his fall ?

P. EDW. : Tell me, good uncle, what Edward do you mean ?

KENT : Nephew, your father ; I dare not call him king.

Y. MOR. : My Lord of Kent, what needs these questions ?
'Tis not in her controlment nor in ours ;
But as the realm and parliament shall please,
So shall your brother be disposed of.—
I like not this relenting mood in Edmund :
Madam, 'tis good to look to him betimes. [*Aside to the* QUEEN.

Q. ISAB. : My lord, the Mayor of Bristow knows our mind.

Y. MOR. : Yea, madam ; and they scape not easily
That fled the field.

Q. ISAB. : Baldock is with the king :
A goodly chancellor, is he not, my lord ?

SIR J. : So are the Spensers, the father and the son.

Y. MOR. : This Edward is the ruin of the realm.

Enter RICE AP HOWEL *with the elder* SPENSER *prisoner, and* ATTENDANTS.

RICE : God save Queen Isabel and her princely son !
Madam, the Mayor and citizens of Bristow,
In sign of love and duty to this presence,
Present by me this traitor to the state,
Spenser, the father to that wanton Spenser,
That, like the lawless Catiline of Rome,
Revell'd in England's wealth and treasury.

Q. ISAB. : We thank you all.

Y. MOR. : Your loving care in this
Deserveth princely favours and rewards.
But where's the king and the other Spenser fled ?

RICE : Spenser the son, created Earl of Glocester,
Is with that smooth-tongu'd scholar Baldock gone,
And shipp'd but late for Ireland with the king.

Y. MOR. : Some whirlwind fetch them back, or sink them all !—
[*Aside.*
They shall be started thence, I doubt it not.

P. EDW. : Shall I not see the king my father yet ?

KENT : Unhappy Edward, chas'd from England's bounds ! [*Aside.*

SIR J. : Madam, what resteth ? why stand you in a muse ?

Q. ISAB. : I rue my lord's ill-fortune : but, alas,
Care of my country call'd me to this war !

Y. MOR. : Madam, have done with care and sad complaint :
Your king hath wrong'd your country and himself,

And we must seek to right it as we may.—
Meanwhile have hence this rebel to the block.

E. SPEN. : Rebel is he that fights against the prince :
So fought not they that fought in Edward's right.

Y. MOR. : Take him away ; he prates.

[*Exeunt Attendants with the elder* SPENSER.

You, Rice ap Howel,
Shall do good service to her majesty,
Being of countenance in your country here,
To follow these rebellious runagates.—
We in mean while, madam, must take advice.
How Baldock, Spenser, and their complices,
May in their fall be follow'd to their end. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the ABBOT, MONKS, KING EDWARD, *the younger* SPENSER, *and* BALDOCK (*the three latter disguised.*)

ABBOT : Have you no doubt, my lord ; have you no fear :
As silent and as careful we will be
To keep your royal person safe with us,
Free from suspect, and fell invasion
Of such as have your majesty in chase,
Yourself, and those your chosen company,
As danger of this stormy time requires.

K. EDW. : Father, thy face should harbour no deceit.
O, hadst thou ever been a king, thy heart,
Pierc'd deeply with sense of my distress,
Could not but take compassion of my state !
Stately and proud in riches and in train,
Whilom I was, powerful and full of pomp :
But what is he whom rule and empery
Have not in life or death made miserable ?—
Come, Spenser,—come Baldock,—come, sit down by me ;
Make trial now of that philosophy
That in our famous nurseries of arts
Thou suck'dst from Plato and from Aristotle.—
Father, this life contemplative is heaven :
O, that I might this life in quiet lead !
But we, alas, are chas'd !—and you, my friends,
Your lives and my dishonour they pursue.—
Yet, gentle monks, for treasure, gold, nor fee,
Do you betray us and our company.

FIRST MONK : Your grace may sit secure, if none but we
Do wot of your abode.

Y. SPEN. : Not one alive : but shrewdly I suspect
A gloomy fellow in a mead below ;
'A gave a long look after us, my lord ;
And all the land, I know, is up in arms,
Arms that pursue our lives with deadly hate.

BALD. : We were embark'd for Ireland ; wretched we,
With awkward winds and with sore tempests driven,
To fall on shore, and here to pine in fear
Of Mortimer and his confederates !

K. Edw. : Mortimer ! who talks of Mortimer ?
Who wounds me with the name of Mortimer,
That bloody man ?—Good father, on thy lap
Lay I this head, laden with mickle care.
O, might I never ope these eyes again,
Never again lift up this drooping head,
O, never more lift up this dying heart !
Y. Spen. : Look up, my lord.—Baldock, this drowsiness
Betides no good ; here even we are betray'd.

Enter, with Welsh hooks, Rice ap Howel, *a* Mower, *and* Leicester.

Mow. : Upon my life, these be the men ye seek.
Rice : Fellow, enough.—My lord, I pray, be short ;
A fair commission warrants what we do.
Leices. : The queen's commission, urg'd by Mortimer :
What cannot gallant Mortimer with the queen ?—
Alas, see where he sits, and hopes unseen
T'escape their hands that seek to reave his life !
Too true it is, *Quem dies vidit veniens superbum,*
Hunc dies vidit fugiens jacentem.
But, Leicester, leave to grow so passionate.—
Spenser and Baldock, by no other names,
I arrest you of high treason here.
Stand not on titles, but obey th' arrest :
'Tis in the name of Isabel the queen.—
My lord, why droop you thus ?
K. Edw. : O day, the last of all my bliss on earth !
Centre of all misfortune ! O my stars,
Why do you lour unkindly on a king ?
Comes Leicester, then, in Isabella's name.
To take my life, my company from me ?
Here, man, rip up this panting breast of mine,
And take my heart in rescue of my friends.
Rice : Away with them !
Y. Spen. : It may become thee yet
To let us take our farewell of his grace.
Abbot : My heart with pity earns to see this sight ;
A king to bear these words and proud commands ! [*Aside.*
K. Edw. : Spenser, ah, sweet Spenser, thus, then, must we part ?
Y. Spen. : We must, my lord ; so will the angry heavens.
K. Edw. : Nay, so will hell and cruel Mortimer :
The gentle heavens have not to do in this.
Bald. : My lord, it is in vain to grieve or storm.
Here humbly of your grace we take our leaves :
Our lots are cast ; I fear me, so is thine.
K. Edw. : In heaven we may, in earth ne'er shall we meet :—
And, Leicester, say, what shall become of us ?
Leices. : Your majesty must go to Killingworth.
K. Edw. : Must ! it is somewhat hard when kings must go.
Leices. : Here is a litter ready for your grace,
That waits your pleasure, and the day grows old.
Rice : As good be gone, as stay and be benighted.

K. Edw. : A litter hast thou ? lay me in a hearse,
And to the gates of hell convey me hence ;
Let Pluto's bells ring out my fatal knell,
And hags howl for my death at Charon's shore ;
For friends hath Edward none but these,
And these must die under a tyrant's sword.
Rice : My lord, be going : care not for these ;
For we shall see them shorter by the heads.
K. Edw. : Well, that shall be shall be : part we must ;
Sweet Spenser, gentle Baldock, part we must.—
Hence, feigned weeds ! unfeigned are my woes.—
[*Throwing off his disguise.*
Father, farewell.—Leicester, thou stay'st for me ;
And go I must.—Life, farewell, with my friends !
[*Exeunt* King Edward *and* Leicester.
Y. Spen. : O, is he gone ? is noble Edward gone ?
Parted from hence, never to see us more !
Rend, sphere of heaven ! and, fire, forsake thy orb !
Earth, melt to air ! gone is my sovereign,
Gone, gone, alas, never to make return !
Bald. : Spenser, I see our souls are fleeting hence ;
We are depriv'd the sunshine of our life.
Make for a new life, man ; throw up thy eyes
And heart and hand to heaven's immortal throne ;
Pay nature's debt with cheerful countenance ;
Reduce we all our lessons unto this,—
To die, sweet Spenser, therefore live we all ;
Spenser, all live to die, and rise to fall.
Rice : Come, come, keep these preachments till you come to the place appointed. You, and such as you are, have made wise work in England. Will your lordships away ?
Mow. : Your lordship I trust will remember me ?
Rice : Remember thee, fellow ! what else ? Follow me to the town.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter King Edward, Leicester, *the* Bishop of Winchester, *and* Trussel.

Leices. : Be patient, good my lord, cease to lament ;
Imagine Killingworth Castle were your court,
And that you lay for pleasure here a space,
Not of compulsion or necessity.
K. Edw. : Leicester, if gentle words might comfort me,
Thy speeches long ago had eas'd my sorrows,
For kind and loving hast thou always been.
The griefs of private men are soon allay'd ;
But not of kings. The forest deer, being struck,
Runs to an herb that closeth up the wounds :
But when the imperial lion's flesh is gor'd,
He rends and tears it with his wrathful paw,
[And], highly scorning that the lowly earth
Should drink his blood, mounts up to the air :
And so it fares with me, whose dauntless mind
Th' ambitious Mortimer would seek to curb,
And that unnatural queen, false Isabel,

That thus hath pent and mew'd me in a prison
For such outrageous passions cloy my soul,
As with the wings of rancour and disdain
Full oft[ten] am I soaring up to heaven,
To plain me to the gods against them both.
But when I call to mind I am a king,
Methinks I should revenge me of my wrongs,
That Mortimer and Isabel have done.
But what are kings, when regiment is gone,
But perfect shadows in a sunshine day?
My nobles rule; I bear the name of king;
I wear the crown; but am controll'd by them,
By Mortimer, and my unconstant queen,
Who spots my nuptial bed with infamy;
Whilst I am lodg'd within this cave of care,
Where sorrow at my elbow still attends,
To company my heart with sad laments,
That bleeds within me for this strange exchange.
But tell me, must I now resign my crown,
To make usurping Mortimer a king?

BISH. OF WIN. : Your grace mistakes; it is for England's good,
And princely Edward's right, we crave the crown.

K. EDW. : No, 'tis for Mortimer, not Edward's head
For he's a lamb, encompassed by wolves,
Which in a moment will abridge his life.
But, if proud Mortimer do wear this crown,
Heavens turn it to a blaze of quenchless fire!
Or, like the snaky wreath of Tisiphon,
Engirt the temples of his hateful head!
So shall not England's vine be perished,
But Edward's name survive, though Edward dies.

LEICES. : My lord, why waste you thus the time away?
They stay your answer: will you yield your crown?

K. EDW. : Ah, Leicester, weigh how hardly I can brook
To lose my crown and kingdom without cause;
To give ambitious Mortimer my right,
That, like a mountain, overwhelms my bliss;
In which extreme my mind here murder'd is!
But that the heavens appoint I must obey.—
Here, take my crown; the life of Edward too:

[*Taking off the crown.*

Two kings in England cannot reign at once.
But stay a while: let me be king till night,
That I may gaze upon this glittering crown;
So shall my eyes receive their last content,
My head, the latest honour due to it,
And jointly both yield up their wished right.
Continue ever, thou celestial sun;
Let never silent night possess this clime;
Stand still, you watches of the element;
All times and seasons, rest you at a stay,
That Edward may be still fair England's king!
But day's bright beams doth vanish fast away,
And needs I must resign my wished crown.

Inhuman creatures, nurs'd with tiger's milk,
Why gape you for your sovereign's overthrow?
My diadem, I mean, and guiltless life.
See, monsters, see! I'll wear my crown again.
[*Putting on the crown.*
What, fear you not the fury of your king?—
But, hapless Edward, thou art fondly led;
They pass not for thy frowns as late they did,
But seek to make a new-elected king;
Which fills my mind with strange despairing thoughts,
Which thoughts are martyred with endless torments;
And in this torment comfort find I none,
But that I feel the crown upon my head;
And therefore let me wear it yet a while.

TRUS.: My lord, the parliament must have present news;
And therefore say, will you resign or no?
[*The king rageth.*

K. EDW.: I'll not resign, but, whilst I live, [be king].
Traitors, be gone, and join you with Mortimer.
Elect, conspire, install, do what you will:
Their blood and yours shall seal these treacheries.

BISH. OF WIN.: This answer we'll return; and so, farewell.
[*Going with* TRUSSEL.

LEICES.: Call them again, my lord, and speak them fair;
For, if they go, the prince shall lose his right.

K. EDW.: Call thou them back; I have no power to speak.

LEICES.: My lord, the king is willing to resign.

BISH. OF WIN.: If he be not, let him choose.

K. EDW.: O, would I might! but heavens and earth conspire
To make me miserable. Here, receive my crown.
Receive it? no, these innocent hands of mine
Shall not be guilty of so foul a crime;
He of you all that most desires my blood,
And will be call'd the murderer of a king,
Take it. What, are you mov'd? pity you me?
Then send for unrelenting Mortimer,
And Isabel, whose eyes being turn'd to steel
Will sooner sparkle fire than shed a tear.
Yet stay; for, rather than I'll look on them.
Here, here! (*Gives the crown.*)—Now, sweet God of heaven,
Make me despise this transitory pomp,
And sit for aye enthronised in heaven!
Come, death, and with thy fingers close my eyes,
Or, if I live, let me forget myself!

BISH. OF WIN.: My lord,—

K. EDW.: Call me not lord; away, out of my sight!
Ah, pardon me! grief makes me lunatic.
Let not that Mortimer protect my son;
More safety there is in a tiger's jaws.
Than his embracements. Bear this to the queen,
Wet with my tears, and dried again with sighs:
[*Gives a handkerchief.*
If with the sight thereof she be not mov'd,
Return it back, and dip it in my blood.

Commend me to my son, and bid him rule
Better than I : yet how have I transgress'd,
Unless it be with too much clemency ?

TRUS. : And thus, most humbly do we take our leave.

K. EDW. : Farewell.

[*Exeunt the* BISHOP OF WINCHESTER *and* TRUSSEL *with the crown.*

I know the next news that they bring
Will be my death ; and welcome shall it be :
To wretched men death is felicity.

LEICES. : Another post ! what news brings he ?

Enter BERKELEY, *who gives a paper to* LEICESTER.

K. EDW. : Such news as I expect.—Come, Berkeley, come,
And tell thy message to my naked breast.

BERK. : My lord, think not a thought so villanous
Can harbour in a man of noble birth.
To do your highness service and devoir,
And save you from your foes, Berkeley would die.

LEICES. : My lord, the council of the queen command
That I resign my charge.

K. EDW. : And who must keep me now ? Must you, my lord ?

BERK. : Ay, my most gracious lord ; so 'tis decreed.

K. EDW. (*taking the paper*) : By Mortimer, whose name is written here !
Well may I rent his name that rends my heart. [*Tears it.*
This poor revenge hath something eas'd my mind :
So may his limbs be torn as is this paper !
Hear me, immortal Jove, and grant it too !

BERK. : Your grace must hence with me to Berkeley straight.

K. EDW. : Whither you will : all places are alike,
And every earth is fit for burial.

LEICES. : Favour him, my lord, as much as lieth in you.

BERK. : Even so betide my soul as I use him !

K. EDW. : Mine enemy hath pitied my estate,
And that's the cause that I am now remov'd.

BERK. : And thinks your grace that Berkeley will be cruel ?

K. EDW. : I know not ; but of this am I assur'd,
That death ends all, and I can die but once.—
Leicester, farewell.

LEICES. : Not yet, my lord ; I'll bear you on your way. [*Exeunt.*

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA *and the younger* MORTIMER.

Y. MOR. : Fair Isabel, now have we our desire ;
The proud corrupters of the light-brain'd king
Have done their homage to the lofty gallows,
And he himself lies in captivity.
Be rul'd by me, and we will rule the realm :
In any case take heed of childish fear,
For now we hold an old wolf by the ears,
That, if he slip, will seize upon us both,
And gripe the sorer, being grip'd himself.

Think therefore, madam, that imports us much
To erect your son with all the speed we may,
And that I be protector over him :
For our behoof, 'twill bear the greater sway
Whenas a king's name shall be under-writ.

Q. Isab. : Sweet Mortimer, the life of Isabel,
Be thou persuaded that I love thee well ;
And therefore, so the prince my son be safe,
Whom I esteem as dear as these mine eyes,
Conclude against his father what thou wilt,
And I myself will willingly subscribe.

Y. Mor. : First would I hear news he were depos'd,
And then let me alone to handle him.

Enter Messenger.

Letters ! from whence ?

Mess. : From Killingworth, my lord.

Q. Isab. : How fares my lord the king ?

Mess. : In health, madam, but full of pensiveness.

Q. Isab. : Alas, poor soul, would I could ease his grief !

Enter the Bishop of Winchester *with the crown.*

Thanks, gentle Winchester.—
Sirrah, be gone. [*Exit* Messenger.

Bish. of Win. : The king hath willingly resign'd his crown.

Q. Isab. : O, happy news ! send for the prince my son.

Bish. of Win. : Further, or this letter was seal'd, Lord Berkeley came,
So that he now is gone from Killingworth ;
And we have heard that Edmund laid a plot
To set his brother free ; nor more but so.
The Lord of Berkeley is so pitiful
As Leicester that had charge of him before.

Q. Isab. : Then let some other be his guardian.

Y. Mor. : Let me alone ; here is the privy-seal,—
[*Exit the* Bishop of Winchester.
Who's there ? Call hither, Gurney and Matrevis.—
[*To Attendants within.*
To dash the heavy-headed Edmund's drift,
Berkeley shall be discharg'd, the king remov'd,
And none but we shall know where he lieth.

Q. Isab. : But, Mortimer, as long as he survives,
What safety rests for us or for my son ?

Y. Mor. : Speak, shall he presently be despatch'd and die ?

Q. Isab. : I would he were, so 'twere not by my means !

Enter Matrevis *and* Gurney.

Y. Mor. : Enough.—Matrevis, write a letter presently.
Unto the Lord of Berkeley from ourself,
That he resign the king to thee and Gurney ;
And, when 'tis done, we will subscribe our name.

Mat. : It shall be done, my lord. [*Writes.*

Y. Mor. : Gurney,—
Gur. : My lord ?
Y. Mor. : As thou intend'st to rise by Mortimer,
Who now makes Fortune's wheel turn as he please,
Seek all the means thou canst to make him droop,
And neither give him kind word nor good look.
Gur. : I warrant you, my lord.
Y. Mor. : And this above the rest : because we hear
That Edmund casts to work his liberty,
Remove him still from place to place by night,
Till at the last he come to Killingworth,
And then from thence to Berkeley back again ;
And by the way, to make him fret the more,
Speak curstly to him ; and in any case
Let no man comfort him, if he chance to weep,
But amplify his grief with bitter words.
Mat. : Fear not, my lord ; we'll do as you command.
Y. Mor. : So, now away ! post thitherwards amain.
Q. Isab. : Whither goes this letter ? to my lord the king ?
Commend me humbly to his majesty,
And tell him that I labour all in vain
To ease his grief and work his liberty ;
And bear him this as witness of my love. [*Gives ring.*
Mat. : I will, Madam. [*Exit with* Gurney.
Y. Mor. : Finely dissembled ! do so still, sweet queen.
Here comes the young prince with the Earl of Kent.
Q. Isab. : Something he whispers in his childish ears.
Y. Mor. : If he have such access unto the prince,
Out plots and stratagems will soon be dash'd.
Q. Isab. : Use Edmund friendly, as if all were well.

Enter Prince Edward, *and* Kent *talking with him.*

Y. Mor. : How fares my honourable Lord of Kent ?
Kent : In health, sweet Mortimer.—How fares your grace ?
Q. Isab. : Well, if my lord your brother were enlarg'd.
Kent : I hear of late he hath depos'd himself.
Q. Isab. : The more my grief.
Y. Mor. : And mine.
Kent : Ah, they do dissemble ! [*Aside.*
Q. Isab. : Sweet son, come hither ; I must talk with thee.
Y. Mor. : You, being his uncle and the next of blood,
Do look to be protector o'er the prince.
Kent : Not I, my lord : who should protect the son,
But she that gave him life ? I mean the queen.
P. Edw. : Mother, persuade me not to wear the crown :
Let him be king ; I am too young to reign.
Q. Isab. : But be content, seeing 'tis his highness' pleasure.
P. Edw. : Let me but see him first, and then I will.
Kent : Ay, do, sweet nephew.
Q. Isab. : Brother, you know it is impossible.
P. Edw. : Why, is he dead ?
Q. Isab. : No, God forbid !
Kent : I would those words proceeded from your heart !

Y. Mor. : Inconstant Edmund, dost thou favour him,
That wast a cause of his imprisonment ?
Kent : The more cause now have I to make amends.
Y. Mor (*aside to* Q. Isab.) : I tell thee, 'tis not meet that one so false
Should come about the person of a prince.—
My lord, he hath betray'd the king his brother,
And therefore trust him not.
P. Edw. : But he repents, and sorrows for it now.
Q. Isab. : Come, son, and go with this gentle lord and me.
P. Edw. : With you I will, but not with Mortimer.
Y. Mor. : Why, youngling, 'sdain'st thou so of Mortimer ?
Then I will carry thee by force away.
P. Edw. : Help, uncle Kent ! Mortimer will wrong me.
Q. Isab. : Brother Edmund, strive not ; we are his friends ;
Isabel is nearer than the Earl of Kent.
Kent : Sister, Edward is my charge ; redeem him.
Q. Isab. : Edward is my son, and I will keep him.
Kent : Mortimer shall know that he hath wronged me.
Hence will I haste to Killingworth Castle,
And rescue aged Edward from his foes,
To be reveng'd on Mortimer and thee. [*Aside.*
[*Exeunt on one side*, Queen Isabella, Prince Edward, *and the younger* Mortimer ; *on the other*, Kent.

Enter Matrevis, Gurney, *and* Soldiers, *with* King Edward.

Mat. : My lord, be not pensive ; we are your friends :
Men are ordain'd to live in misery ;
Therefore, come ; dalliance dangereth our lives.
K. Edw. : Friends, whither must unhappy Edward go ?
Will hateful Mortimer appoint no rest ?
Must I be vexed like the nightly bird,
Whose sight is loathsome to all winged fowls ?
When will the fury of his mind assuage ?
When will his heart be satisfied with blood ?
If mine will serve, unbowel straight this breast,
And give my heart to Isabel and him :
It is the chiefest mark they level at.
Gur. : Not so, my liege : the queen hath given this charge,
To keep your grace in safety :
Your passions make your dolours to increase.
K. Edw. : This usage makes my misery increase.
But can my air of life continue long,
When all my senses are annoy'd with stench ?
Within a dungeon England's king is kept,
Where I am starv'd for want of sustenance ;
My daily diet is heart-breaking sobs,
That almost rent the closet of my heart :
Thus lives old Edward not reliev'd by any,
And so must die, though pitied by many.
O, water, gentle friends, to cool my thirst,
And clear my body from foul excrements !

MAT. : Here's channel-water, as our charge is given :
Sit down, for we'll be barbers to your grace.
K. EDW. : Traitors, away ! what, will you murder me,
Or choke your sovereign with puddle-water ?
GUR. : No, but wash your face, and shave away your beard,
Lest you be known, and so be rescued.
MAT. : Why strive you thus ? your labour is in vain.
K. EDW. : The wren may strive against the lion's strength,
But all in vain : so vainly do I strive
To seek for mercy at a tyrant's hand.
[*They wash him with puddle-water, and shave his beard away.*
Immortal powers, that know the painful cares
That wait upon my poor distressed soul,
O, level all your looks upon these daring men
That wrong their liege and sovereign, England's king !
O Gaveston, it is for thee that I am wrong'd !
For me both thou and both the Spensers died ;
And for your sakes a thousand wrongs I'll take.
The Spensers' ghosts, wherever they remain,
Wish well to mine ; then, tush, for them I'll die.
MAT. : 'Twixt theirs and yours shall be no enmity.
Come, come, away ! Now put the torches out :
We'll enter in by darkness to Killingworth.
GUR. : How now ! who comes there ?

Enter KENT.

MAT. : Guard the king sure : it is the Earl of Kent.
K. EDW. : O gentle brother, help to rescue me !
MAT. : Keep them asunder ; thrust in the king.
KENT : Soldiers, let me but talk to him one word.
GUR. : Lay hands upon the earl for his assault.
KENT : Lay down your weapons, traitors ! yield the king !
MAT. : Edmund, yield thou thyself, or thou shalt die.
KENT : Base villains, wherefore do you gripe me thus ?
GUR. : Bind him, and so convey him to the court.
KENT : Where is the court but here ? here is the king
And I will visit him : why stay you me ?
MAT. : The court is where Lord Mortimer remains :
Thither shall your honour go ; and so, farewell.
[*Exeunt* MATREVIS *and* GURNEY *with* KING EDWARD.
KENT : O, miserable is that common-weal,
Where lords keep courts, and kings are lock'd in prison !
FIRST SOLD. : Wherefore stay we ? on, sirs, to the court !
KENT : Ay, lead me whither you will, even to my death,
Seeing that my brother cannot be releas'd. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the younger MORTIMER.

Y. MOR. : The king must die, or Mortimer goes down ;
The commons now begin to pity him :
Yet he that is the cause of Edward's death,
Is sure to pay for it when his son's of age ;
And therefore will I do it cunningly.

This letter, written by a friend of ours,
Contains his death, yet bids them save his life ; [*Reads.*
Edwardum occidere nolite timere, bonum est,
Fear not to kill the king, 'tis good he die :
But read it thus, and that's another sense ;
Edwardum occidere nolite, timere bonum est,
Kill not the king, 'tis good to fear the worst.
Unpointed as it is, thus shall it go.
That, being dead, if it chance to be found,
Matrevis and the rest may bear the blame,
And we be quit that caus'd it to be done.
Within this room is lock'd the messenger
That shall convey it, and perform the rest ;
And, by a secret token that he bears,
Shall he be murder'd when the deed is done.—
Lightborn, come forth !

Enter LIGHTBORN.

Art thou so resolute as thou wast ?

LIGHT. : What else, my lord ? and far more resolute.

Y. MOR. : And hast thou cast how to accomplish it ?

LIGHT. : Ay, ay ; and none shall know which way he died.

Y. MOR. : But at his looks, Lightborn, thou wilt relent.

LIGHT. : Relent ! ha, ha ! I use much to relent.

Y. MOR. : Well, do it bravely, and be secret.

LIGHT. : You shall not need to give instructions ;
'Tis not the first time I have kill'd a man :
I learn'd in Naples how to poison flowers ;
To strangle with a lawn thrust down the throat ;
To pierce the wind pipe with a needle's point ;
Or, whilst one is asleep, to take a quill,
And blow a little powder in his ears ;
Or open his mouth, and pour quick-silver down.
But yet I have braver way than these.

Y. MOR. : What's that ?

LIGHT. : Nay, you shall pardon me ; none shall know my tricks.

Y. MOR. : I care not how it is, so it be not spied.
Deliver this to Gurney and Matrevis : [*Gives letter.*
At every ten-miles end thou hast a horse :
Take this (*Gives money*) : away, and never see me more !

LIGHT. : No ?

Y. MOR. : No ; unless thou bring me news of Edward's death.

LIGHT. : That will I quickly do. Farewell, my lord. [*Exit.*

Y. MOR. : The prince I rule, the queen do I command,
And with a lowly congé to the ground
The proudest lords salute me as I pass ;
I seal, I cancel, I do what I will.
Fear'd am I more than lov'd ;—let me be fear'd,
And, when I frown, make all the court look pale.
I view the prince with Aristarchus' eyes,
Whose looks were as a breeching to a boy.
They thrust upon me the protectorship,
And sue to me for that that I desire ;

While at the council-table, grave enough,
And not unlike a bashful puritan,
First I complain of imbecility,
Saying it is *onus quam gravissimum ;*
Till, being interrupted by my friends,
Suscepi that *provinciam,* as they term it ;
And, to conclude, I am Protector now.
Now is all sure : the queen and Mortimer
Shall rule the realm, the king ; and none rule us.
Mine enemies will I plague, my friends advance ;
And what I list command who dare control ?
Major sum quàm cui possit fortuna nocere :
And that this be the coronation-day,
It pleaseth me and Isabel the queen. [*Trumpets within.*
The trumpets sound ; I must go take my place.

ter KING EDWARD THE THIRD, QUEEN ISABELLA, *the* ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, CHAMPION, *and* NOBLES.

ARCHB. OF CANT. : Long live King Edward, by the grace of God
King of England and Lord of Ireland !
CHAM. : If any Christian, Heathen, Turk, or Jew,
Dares but affirm that Edward's not true king,
And will avouch his saying with the sword,
I am the Champion that will combat him.
Y. MOR. : None comes : sound, trumpets ! [*Trumpets.*
K. EDW. THIRD : Champion, here's to thee. [*Gives purse.*
Q. ISAB. : Lord Mortimer, now take him to your charge.

Enter SOLDIERS *with* KENT *prisoner.*

Y. MOR. : What traitor have we there with blades and bills ?
FIRST SOLD. : Edmund the Earl of Kent.
K. EDW. THIRD : What hath he done ?
FIRST SOLD. : 'A would have taken the king away perforce,
As we were bringing him to Killingworth.
Y. MOR. : Did you attempt his rescue, Edmund ? speak.
KENT : Mortimer, I did : he is our king,
And thou compell'st this prince to wear the crown.
Y. MOR. : Strike off his head : he shall have martial law.
KENT : Strike off my head ! base traitor, I defy thee !
K. EDW. THIRD : My lord, he is my uncle, and shall live.
Y. MOR. : My lord, he is your enemy, and shall die.
KENT : Stay, villains !
K. EDW. THIRD : Sweet mother, if I cannot pardon him,
Entreat my Lord Protector for his life.
Q. ISAB. : Son, be content : I dare not speak a word.
K. EDW. THIRD : Nor I ; and yet methinks I should command :
But, seeing I cannot, I'll entreat for him.—
My lord, if you will let my uncle live,
I will requite it when I come to age.
Y. MOR. : 'Tis for your highness' good and for the realm's.—
How often shall I bid you bear him hence ?

KENT : Art thou king ? must I die at thy command ?
Y. MOR. : At our command.—Once more, away with him !
KENT : Let me but stay and speak ; I will not go :
Either my brother or his son is king,
And none of both them thirst for Edmund's blood :
And therefore, soldiers, whither will you hale me ?
[*Soldiers hale* KENT *away, and carry him to be beheaded.*
K. EDW. THIRD : What safety may I look for at his hands,
If that my uncle shall be murder'd thus ?
Q. ISAB. : Fear not, sweet boy ; I'll guard thee from thy foes :
Had Edmund liv'd, he would have sought thy death.
Come, son, we'll ride a-hunting in the park.
K. EDW. THIRD : And shall my uncle Edmund ride with us ?
Q. ISAB. : He is a traitor ; think not on him : come. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MATREVIS *and* GURNEY.

MAT. : Gurney, I wonder the king dies not,
Being in a vault up to the knees in water,
To which the channels of the castle run,
From whence a damp continually ariseth,
That were enough to poison any man,
Much more a king, brought up so tenderly.
GUR. : And so do I, Matrevis : yesternight
I open'd but the door to throw him meat,
And I was almost stifled with the savour.
MAT. : He hath a body able to endure
More than we can inflict : and therefore now
Let us assail his mind another while.
GUR. : Send for him out thence, and I will anger him.
MAT. : But stay ; who's this ?

Enter LIGHTBORN.

LIGHT. : My Lord Protector greets you. [*Gives letter.*
GUR. : What's here ? I know not how to construe it.
MAT. : Gurney, it was left unpointed for the nonce ;
Edwardum occidere nolite timere,
That's his meaning.
LIGHT. : Know you this token ? I must have the king. [*Gives token.*
MAT. : Ay, stay a while ; thou shalt have answer straight.—
This villain's sent to make away the king.
GUR. : I thought as much.
MAT. : And, when the murder's done,
See how he must be handled for his labour,—
Pereat iste ! Let him have the king ;
What else ?—Here is the keys, this is the lake :
Do as you are commanded by my lord.
LIGHT. : I know what I must do. Get you away :
Yet be not far off ; I shall need your help :
See that in the next room I have a fire,
And get me a spit, and let it be red-hot.
MAT. : Very well.

GUR. : Need you anything besides ?
LIGHT. : What else ? a table and a feather-bed.
GUR. : That's all ?
LIGHT. : Ay, ay : so, when I call you, bring it in.
MAT. : Fear not thou that.
GUR. : Here's a light to go into the dungeon.
[*Gives light to* LIGHTBORN, *and then exit with* MATREVIS.
LIGHT. : So, now
Must I about this gear : ne'er was there any
So finely handled as this king shall be.—
Foh, here's a place indeed with all my heart !
K. EDW. : Who's there ? what light is that ? wherefore com'st thou ?
LIGHT. : To comfort you, and bring you joyful news.
K. EDW. : Small comfort finds poor Edward in thy looks :
Villain, I know thou com'st to murder me.
LIGHT. : To murder you, my most gracious lord ?
Far is it from my heart to do you harm.
The queen sent me to see how you were us'd,
For she relents at this your misery :
And what eye can refrain from shedding tears,
To see a king in this most piteous state ?
K. EDW. : Weep'st thou already ? list a while to me,
And then thy heart, were it as Gurney's is,
Or as Matrevis', hewn from the Caucasus,
Yet will it melt ere I have done my tale.
This dungeon where they keep me is the sink
Wherein the filth of all the castle falls.
LIGHT. : O villains !
K. EDW. : And there, in mire and puddle, have I stood
This ten days' space ; and, lest that I should sleep,
One plays continually upon a drum ;
They give me bread and water, being a king ;
So that, for want of sleep and sustenance,
My mind's distemper'd, and my body's numb'd,
And whether I have limbs or no I know not.
O, would my blood dropp'd out from every vein,
As doth this water from my tatter'd robes !
Tell Isabel the queen, I look'd not thus,
When for her sake I ran at tilt in France,
And there unhors'd the Duke of Cleremont.
LIGHT. : O, speak no more, my lord ! this breaks my heart.
Lie on this bed, and rest yourself a while.
K. EDW. : These looks of thine can harbour naught but death ;
I see my tragedy written in thy brows.
Yet stay a while ; forbear thy bloody hand,
And let me see the stroke before it comes,
That even then when I shall lose my life,
My mind may be more steadfast on my God.
LIGHT. : What means your highness to mistrust me thus ?
K. EDW. : What mean'st thou to dissemble with me thus ?
LIGHT. : These hands were never stain'd with innocent blood,
Nor shall they now be tainted with a king's.

K. Edw. : Forgive my thought for having such a thought.
One jewel have I left ; receive thou this : [*Giving jewel.*
Still fear I, and I know not what's the cause,
But every joint shakes as I give it thee.
O, if thou harbour'st murder in thy heart,
Let this gift change thy mind, and save thy soul !
Know that I am a king. O, at that name
I feel a hell of grief ! where is my crown ?
Gone, gone ! and do I [still] remain alive ?
Light. : You're overwatch'd, my lord : lie down and rest.
K. Edw. : But that grief keeps me waking, I should sleep ;
For not these ten days have these eye-lids clos'd.
Now, as I speak, they fall ; and yet with fear
Open again. O, wherefore sitt'st thou here ?
Light. : If you mistrust me, I'll be gone, my lord.
K. Edw. : No, no ; for, if thou mean'st to murder me,
Thou wilt return again ; and therefore stay. [*Sleeps.*
Light. : He sleeps.
K. Edw. (*waking*) : O, let me not die yet ! O, stay a while !
Light. : How now, my lord !
K. Edw. : Something still buzzeth in mine ears,
And tells me, if I sleep, I never wake :
This fear is that which makes me tremble thus ;
And therefore tell me, wherefore art thou come ?
Light. : To rid thee of thy life.—Matrevis, come !

Enter Matrevis *and* Gurney.

K. Edw. : I am too weak and feeble to resist.—
Assist me, sweet God, and receive my soul !
Light. : Run for the table.
K. Edw. : O, spare me, or despatch me in a trice !
[Matrevis *brings in a table.* King Edward *is murdered by holding him down on the bed with the table, and stamping on it.*
Light. : So, lay the table down, and stamp on it,
But not too hard, lest that you bruise his body.
Mat. : I fear me that this cry will raise the town,
And therefore let us take horse and away.
Light. : Tell me, sirs, was it not bravely done ?
Gur. : Excellent well : take this for thy reward.
[*Stabs* Lightborn, *who dies.*
Come, let us cast the body in the moat,
And bear the king's to Mortimer our lord :
Away ! [*Exeunt with the bodies.*

Enter the younger Mortimer *and* Matrevis.

Y. Mor. : Is't done, Matrevis, and the murderer dead ?
Mat. : Ay, my good lord : I would it were undone !
Y. Mor. : Matrevis, if thou now grow'st penitent,
I'll be thy ghostly father ; therefore choose,
Whether thou wilt be secret in this,
Or else die by the hand of Mortimer.
Mat. : Gurney, my lord, is fled, and will, I fear,

Betray us both ; therefore let me fly.
Y. MOR. : Fly to the savages !
MAT. : I humbly thank your honour. [*Exit.*
Y. MOR. : As for myself, I stand as Jove's huge tree.
And others are but shrubs compar'd to me :
Or tremble at my name, and I fear none :
Let's see who dare impeach me for his death !

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA.

Q. ISAB. : Ah, Mortimer, the king my son hath news,
His father's dead, and we have murder'd him !
Y. MOR. : What if he have ? the king is yet a child.
Q. ISAB. : Ay, but he tears his hair, and wrings his hands,
And vows to be reveng'd upon us both.
Into the council-chamber he is gone,
To crave the aid and succour of his peers.
Ay me, see where he comes, and they with him !
Now, Mortimer, begins our tragedy.

Enter KING EDWARD THE THIRD, LORDS, *and* ATTENDANTS.

FIRST LORD : Fear not, my lord ; know that you are a king.
K. EDW. THIRD : Villain !—
Y. MOR. : Ho, now, my lord !
K. EDW. THIRD : Think not that I am frighted with thy words :
My father's murder'd through thy treachery ;
And thou shalt die, and on his mournful hearse
Thy hateful and accursed head shall lie,
To witness to the world that by thy means
His kingly body was too soon interr'd.
Q. ISAB. : Weep not, sweet son.
K. EDW. THIRD : Forbid not me to weep ; he was my father ;
And had you lov'd him half so well as I,
You could not bear his death thus patiently :
But you, I fear, conspir'd with Mortimer.
FIRST LORD : Why speak you not unto my lord the king ?
Y. MOR. : Because I think scorn to be accus'd.
Who is the man dares say I murder'd him ?
K. EDW. THIRD : Traitor, in me my loving father speaks,
And plainly saith, 'twas thou that murder'dst him.
Y. MOR. : But hath your grace no other proof than this ?
K. EDW. THIRD : Yes, if this be the hand of Mortimer.
[*Showing letter.*
Y. MOR. : False Gurney hath betray'd me and himself.
[*Aside to* QUEEN ISABELLA.
Q. ISAB. : I fear'd as much : murder can not be hid.
Y. MOR. : It is my hand ; what gather you by this ?
K. EDW. THIRD : That thither thou didst send a murderer.
Y. MOR. : What murderer ? bring forth the man I sent.
K. EDW. THIRD : Ah, Mortimer, thou know'st that he is slain !
And so shalt thou be too.—Why stays he here ?

Bring him unto a hurdle, drag him forth ;
Hang him, I say, and set his quarters up :
And bring his head back presently to me.

Q. ISAB. : For my sake, sweet son, pity Mortimer !

Y. MOR. : Madam, entreat not : I will rather die
Than sue for life unto a paltry boy.

K. EDW. THIRD : Hence with the traitor, with the murderer !

Y. MOR. : Base Fortune, now I see, that in thy wheel
There is a point, to which when men aspire,
They tumble headlong down : that point I touch'd,
And, seeing there was no place to mount up higher,
Why should I grieve at my declining fall ?—
Farewell, fair queen : weep not for Mortimer,
That scorns the world, and, as a traveller,
Goes to discover countries yet unknown.

K. EDW. THIRD : What, suffer you the traitor to delay ?

[*Exit the younger* MORTIMER *with* FIRST LORD *and some of the* ATTENDANTS.

Q. ISAB. : As thou receivest thy life from me,
Spill not the blood of gentle Mortimer !

K. EDW. THIRD : This argues that you spilt my father's blood,
Else would you not entreat for Mortimer.

Q. ISAB. : I spill his blood ! no.

K. EDW. THIRD : Ay, madam, you ; for so the rumour runs.

Q. ISAB. : That rumour is untrue : for loving thee,
Is this report rais'd on poor Isabel.

K. EDW. THIRD : I do not think her so unnatural.

SEC. LORD : My lord, I fear me it will prove too true.

K. EDW. THIRD : Mother, you are suspected for his death,
And therefore we commit you to the Tower,
Till further trial may be made thereof.
If you be guilty, though I be your son,
Think not to find me slack or pitiful.

Q. ISAB. : Nay, to my death ; for too long have I liv'd,
Whenas my son thinks to abridge my days.

K. EDW. THIRD : Away with her ! her words enforce these tears.
And I shall pity her, if she speak again.

Q. ISAB. : Shall I not mourn for my beloved lord ?
And with the rest accompany him to his grave.

SEC. LORD : Thus, madam, 'tis the king's will you shall hence.

Q. ISAB. : He hath forgotten me : stay, I am his mother.

SEC. LORD : That boots not ; therefore, gentle madam, go.

Q. ISAB. : Then come, sweet death, and rid me of this grief !

[*Exit with* SECOND LORD *and some of the* ATTENDANTS.

Re-enter FIRST LORD, *with the head of the younger* MORTIMER.

FIRST LORD : My lord, here is the head of Mortimer.

K. EDW. THIRD : Go fetch my father's hearse, where it shall lie ;
And bring my funeral robes. [*Exeunt* ATTENDANTS.
Accursed head,
Could I have rul'd thee then, as I do now,

Thou hadst not hatch'd this monstrous treachery !—
Here comes the hearse : help me to mourn, my lords.

Re-enter ATTENDANTS, *with the hearse and funeral robes.*

Sweet father, here unto thy murder'd ghost
I offer up the wicked traitor's head ;
And let these tears, distilling from mine eyes,
Be witness of my grief and innocency. [*Exeunt.*

1599

THE SHOEMAKER'S HOLIDAY

(By THOMAS DEKKER)

Six years have elapsed since Marlowe died. Something has happened in the interval. There is a sureness of touch about the newcomers' work. There is also a feeling that we can only describe as more civilised. Shakespeare has arrived.

Court patronage has to some extent raised the status of the stage, but players and playwrights continue to lead Bohemian lives, to the scandal of all good citizens. Thomas Dekker (1570?–1637?) went with the current. He was conspicuous in the *Poetamachia*, or War of the Poets—a grand flare-up of literary jealousies—and he fell foul of the authorities on at least two occasions, as we learn from the diary of his employer, Philip Henslowe : " Lent unto the company, the 4 of February, 1598, to discharge Mr. Dicker out of the counter in the poultry the some of fortie shillings," and again, " Lent unto Thomas Downton . . . to descarge Thomas Dickers from the areaste of my lord Chamberlain's men. I saye lent. . . ."

Apart from the entries in Henslowe's diary, we know little of Dekker's life story. His work has endeared him to readers of sensibility in every subsequent generation. Lamb described him as " a sort of *prose* Shakespeare." He was, before all things, human. As Mr. Ernest Rhys has expressed it, " he was the type of the prodigal in literature—the kindhearted, irresponsible poet whom we all know, and love, and pardon seventy times seven."

If *The Shoemaker's Holiday* is the play by which he is best known, the two parts of *The Honest Whore* and *Old Fortunatus* are almost as felicitously touching. He was a great Londoner, collaborating in some of the vividest of the " realistic " comedies of the period, besides bequeathing to us, in *The Gull's Hornbook* an invaluable guide to the social habits of the " young man about town " of his day.

A real Simon Eyre, according to Stowe, built Leadenhall, became Lord Mayor of London in 1445, and died in 1459, one hundred and forty years before this play was performed by the Admiral's company in the presence of Queen Elizabeth.

THE SHOEMAKER'S HOLIDAY

or A Pleasant Comedy of The Gentle Craft

Characters

THE KING
THE EARL OF CORNWALL
SIR HUGH LACY, *Earl of Lincoln*
ROWLAND LACY, *otherwise* HANS, } *His Nephews*
ASKEW,
SIR ROGER OTELEY, *Lord Mayor of London*
Master HAMMON, Master WARNER, Master SCOTT, } *Citizens of London*
SIMON EYRE, *the Shoemaker*
ROGER, *commonly called* HODGE, FIRK, RALPH, } EYRE'S *Journeymen*
LOVELL, *a Courtier*
DODGER, *Servant to the* EARL OF LINCOLN
A DUTCH SKIPPER
A BOY
ROSE, *Daughter of* SIR ROGER.
SYBIL, *her Maid*
MARGERY, *Wife of* SIMON EYRE
JANE, *Wife of* RALPH.

COURTIERS, ATTENDANTS, OFFICERS, SOLDIERS, HUNTERS, SHOEMAKERS, APPRENTICES, SERVANTS

Scene.—LONDON AND OLD FORD

ACT I

SCENE I.—*A Street in London.*

Enter the LORD MAYOR *and the* EARL OF LINCOLN.

LINCOLN : My lord mayor, you have sundry times
Feasted myself and many courtiers more :
Seldom or never can we be so kind
To make requital of your courtesy.
But leaving this, I hear my cousin Lacy
Is much affected to your daughter Rose.
LORD MAYOR : True, my good lord, and she loves him so well
That I mislike her boldness in the chase.
LINCOLN : Why, my lord mayor, think you it then a shame,
To join a Lacy with an Oteley's name ?
LORD MAYOR : Too mean is my poor girl for his high birth ;
Poor citizens must not with courtiers wed,
Who will in silks and gay apparel spend
More in one year than I am worth, by far :
Therefore your honour need not doubt my girl.
LINCOLN : Take heed, my lord, advise you what you do !
A verier unthrift lives not in the world,
Than is my cousin ; for I'll tell you what :
'Tis now almost a year since he requested
To travel countries for experience ;
I furnished him with coin, bills of exchange,
Letters of credit, men to wait on him,
Solicited my friends in Italy
Well to respect him. But to see the end :

Scant had he journeyed through half Germany,
But all his coin was spent, his men cast off,
His bills embezzled, and my jolly coz,
Ashamed to show his bankrupt presence here,
Became a shoemaker in Wittenberg,
A goodly science for a gentleman
Of such descent ! Now judge the rest by this :
Suppose your daughter have a thousand pound,
He did consume me more in one half year :
And make him heir to all the wealth you have,
One twelvemonth's rioting will waste it all.
Then seek, my lord, some honest citizen
To wed your daughter to.

LORD MAYOR : I thank your lordship.
(*Aside*) Well, fox, I understand your subtilty.—
As for your nephew, let your lordship's eye
But watch his actions, and you need not fear,
For I have sent my daughter far enough.
And yet your cousin Rowland might do well,
Now he hath learned an occupation :
And yet I scorn to call him son-in-law.

LINCOLN : Ay, but I have a better trade for him :
I thank his grace, he hath appointed him
Chief colonel of all those companies
Mustered in London and the shires about,
To serve his highness in those wars of France.
See where he comes !—

Enter LOVELL, LACY, *and* ASKEW.

Lovell, what news with you ?

LOVELL : My Lord of Lincoln, 'tis his highness' will,
That presently your cousin ship for France
With all his powers ; he would not for a million,
But they should land at Dieppe within four days.

LINCOLN : Go certify his grace, it shall be done. [*Exit* LOVELL.
Now, cousin Lacy, in what forwardness
Are all your companies ?

LACY : All well prepared.
The men of Hertfordshire lie at Mile-end,
Suffolk and Essex train in Tothill-fields,
The Londoners and those of Middlesex,
All gallantly prepared in Finsbury,
With frolic spirits long for their parting hour.

LORD MAYOR : They have their imprest, coats, and furniture ;
And, if it please your cousin Lacy come
To the Guildhall, he shall receive his pay ;
And twenty pounds besides my brethren
Will freely give him, to approve our loves
We bear unto my lord, your uncle here.

LACY : I thank your honour.

LINCOLN : Thanks, my good lord mayor.

LORD MAYOR : At the Guildhall we will expect your coming [*Exit.*

LINCOLN : To approve your loves to me ? No subtilty !
Nephew, that twenty pound he doth bestow
For joy to rid you from his daughter Rose.
But, cousins both, now here are none but friends,
I would not have you cast an amorous eye
Upon so mean a project as the love
Of a gay, wanton, painted citizen.
I know, this churl even in the height of scorn
Doth hate the mixture of his blood with thine.
I pray thee, do thou so ! Remember, coz,
What honourable fortunes wait on thee :
Increase the king's love, which so brightly shines,
And gilds thy hopes. I have no heir but thee,—
And yet not thee, if with a wayward spirit
Thou start from the true bias of my love.

LACY : My lord, I will for honour, not desire
Of land or livings, or to be your heir,
So guide my actions in pursuit of France,
As shall add glory to the Lacys' name.

LINCOLN : Coz, for those words here's thirty Portuguese,
And, nephew Askew, there's a few for you.
Fair Honour, in her loftiest eminence,
Stays in France for you, till you fetch her thence.
Then, nephews, clap swift wings on your designs :
Begone, begone, make haste to the Guildhall ;
There presently I'll meet you. Do not stay :
Where honour beckons, shame attends delay. [*Exit.*

ASKEW : How gladly would your uncle have you gone !

LACY : True, coz, but I'll o'erreach his policies.
I have some serious business for three days,
Which nothing but my presence can dispatch.
You, therefore, cousin, with the companies,
Shall haste to Dover ; there I'll meet with you :
Or, if I stay past my prefixèd time,
Away for France ; we'll meet in Normandy.
The twenty pounds my lord mayor gives to me
You shall receive, and these ten Portuguese,
Part of mine uncle's thirty. Gentle coz,
Have care to our great charge ; I know, your wisdom
Hath tried itself in higher consequence.

ASKEW : Coz, all myself am yours : yet have this care,
To lodge in London with all secrecy ;
Our uncle Lincoln hath, besides his own,
Many a jealous eye, that in your face
Stares only to watch means for your disgrace.

LACY : Stay, cousin, who be these ?

Enter SIMON EYRE, MARGERY *his wife*, HODGE, FIRK, JANE, *and* RALPH *with a piece.*

EYRE : Leave whining, leave whining ! Away with this wimpering, this puling, these blubbering tears, and these wet eyes ! I'll get thy husband discharged I warrant thee, sweet Jane ; go to !

HODGE : Master, here be the captains.

EYRE : Peace, Hodge ; husht, ye knave, husht !

FIRK : Here be the cavaliers and the colonels, master.

EYRE : Peace, Firk ; peace, my fine Firk ! Stand by with your pishery-pashery, away ! I am a man of the best presence ; I'll speak to them, an they were Popes.—Gentlemen, captains, colonels, commanders ! Brave men, brave leaders, may it please you to give me audience. I am Simon Eyre, the mad shoemaker of Tower Street ; this wench with the mealy mouth that will never tire is my wife, I can tell you ; here's Hodge, my man and my foreman ; here's Firk, my fine firking journeyman, and this is blubbered Jane. All we come to be suitors for this honest Ralph. Keep him at home, and as I am a true shoemaker and a gentleman of the Gentle Craft, buy spurs yourselves, and I'll find ye boots these seven years.

MARGERY : Seven years, husband ?

EYRE : Peace, midriff, peace ! I know what I do. Peace !

FIRK : Truly, master cormorant, you shall do God good service to let Ralph and his wife stay together. She's a young new-married woman ; if you take her husband away from her a night, you undo her ; she may beg in the day-time ; for he's as good a workman at a prick and an awl, as any is in our trade.

JANE : O let him stay, else I shall be undone.

FIRK : Ay, truly, she shall be laid at one side like a pair of old shoes else, and be occupied for no use.

LACY : Truly, my friends, it lies not in my power :
The Londoners are pressed, paid, and set forth
By the lord mayor ; I cannot change a man.

HODGE : Why, then you were as good be a corporal as a colonel, if you cannot discharge one good fellow ; and I tell you true, I think you do more than you can answer, to press a man within a year and a day of his marriage.

EYRE : Well said, melancholy Hodge ; gramercy, my fine foreman.

MARGERY : Truly, gentlemen, it were ill done for such as you, to stand so stiffly against a poor young wife ; considering her case, she is new-married, but let that pass : I pray, deal not roughly with her ; her husband is a young man, and but newly entered, but let that pass.

EYRE : Away with your pishery-pashery, your pols and your edipols ! Peace, midriff ; silence, Cicely Bumtrinket ! Let your head speak.

FIRK : Yea, and the horns too, master.

EYRE : Too soon, my fine Firk, too soon ! Peace, scoundrels ! See you this man ? Captains, you will not release him ? Well, let him go ; he's a proper shot ; let him vanish ! Peace, Jane, dry up thy tears, they'll make his powder dankish. Take him, brave men ; Hector of Troy was an hackney to him, Hercules and Termagant scoundrels, Prince Arthur's Round-table—by the Lord of Ludgate—ne'er fed such a tall, such a dapper swordsman ; by the life of Pharaoh, a brave, resolute swordsman ! Peace, Jane ! I say no more, mad knaves.

FIRK : See, see, Hodge, how my master raves in commendation of Ralph !

HODGE : Ralph, th'art a gull, by this hand, an thou goest not.

ASKEW : I am glad, good Master Eyre, it is my hap
To meet so resolute a soldier.
Trust me, for your report and love to him,
A common slight regard shall not respect him.

LACY : Is thy name Ralph ?

RALPH : Yes, sir.
LACY : Give me thy hand ;
Thou shalt not want, as I am a gentleman.
Woman, be patient ; God, no doubt, will send
Thy husband safe again ; but he must go,
His country's quarrel says it shall be so.
HODGE : Th'art a gull, by my stirrup, if thou dost not go. I will not have thee strike thy gimlet into these weak vessels ; prick thine enemies, Ralph.

Enter DODGER.

DODGER : My lord, your uncle on the Tower-hill
Stays with the lord mayor and the aldermen,
And doth request you with all speed you may,
To hasten thither.
ASKEW : Cousin, come let's go.
LACY : Dodger, run you before, tell them we come.— [*Exit* DODGER.
This Dodger is mine uncle's parasite.
The arrant'st varlet that e'er breathed on earth ;
He sets more discord in a noble house
By one day's broaching of his pickthank tales,
Than can be salved again in twenty years,
And he, I fear, shall go with us to France,
To pry into our actions.
ASKEW : Therefore, coz,
It shall behove you to be circumspect.
LACY : Fear not, good cousin.—Ralph, hie to your colours.
RALPH : I must, because there is no remedy ;
But, gentle master and my loving dame,
As you have always been a friend to me,
So in my absence think upon my wife.
JANE : Alas, my Ralph.
MARGERY : She cannot speak for weeping.
EYRE : Peace, you cracked groats, you mustard tokens, disquiet not the brave soldier. Go thy ways, Ralph !
JANE : Ay, ay, you bid him go ; what shall I do
When he is gone ?
FIRK : Why, be doing with me or my fellow Hodge : be not idle.
EYRE : Let me see thy hand, Jane. This fine hand, this white hand, these pretty fingers must spin, must card, must work ; work, you bombast-cotton-candle-quean ; work for your living, with a pox to you.—Hold thee, Ralph, here's five sixpences for thee ; fight for the honour of the Gentle Craft, for the gentlemen shoemakers, the courageous cordwainers, the flower of St. Martin's, the mad knaves of Bedlam, Fleet Street, Tower Street and Whitechapel ; crack me the crowns of the French knaves ; a pox on them, crack them ; fight, by the Lord of Ludgate ; fight, my fine boy !
FIRK : Here, Ralph, here's three twopences : two carry into France, the third shall wash our souls at parting, for sorrow is dry. For my sake, firk the *Basa mon cues*.
HODGE : Ralph, I am heavy at parting ; but here's a shilling for thee. God send thee to cram thy slops with French crowns, and thy enemies' bellies with bullets.
RALPH : I thank you, master, and I thank you all.
Now, gentle wife, my loving lovely Jane.

Rich men, at parting, give their wives rich gifts,
Jewels and rings, to grace their lily hands.
Thou know'st our trade makes rings for women's heels :
Here take this pair of shoes, cut out by Hodge,
Stitched by my fellow Firk, seamed by myself,
Made up and pinked with letters for thy name.
Wear them, my dear Jane, for thy husband's sake,
And every morning, when thou pull'st them on,
Remember me, and pray for my return.
Make much of them ; for I have made them so,
That I can know them from a thousand mo.

Drum sounds. Enter the LORD MAYOR, *the* EARL OF LINCOLN, LACY, ASKEW, DODGER, *and Soldiers. They pass over the stage ;* RALPH *falls in amongst them ;* FIRK *and the rest cry "Farewell," &c., and so exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*A Garden at Old Ford.*

Enter ROSE, *alone, making a garland.*

ROSE : Here sit thou down upon this flow'ry bank,
And make a garland for thy Lacy's head.
These pinks, these roses, and these violets,
These blushing gilliflowers, these marigolds,
The fair embroidery of his coronet,
Carry not half such beauty in their cheeks,
As the sweet countenance of my Lacy doth.
O my most unkind father ! O my stars,
Why lowered you so at my nativity,
To make me love, yet live robbed of my love ?
Here as a thief am I imprisonèd
For my dear Lacy's sake within those walls,
Which by my father's cost were builded up
For better purposes ; here must I languish
For him that doth as much lament, I know,
Mine absence, as for him I pine in woe.

Enter SYBIL.

SYBIL : Good morrow, young mistress. I am sure you make that garland for me ; against I shall be Lady of the Harvest.

ROSE : Sybil, what news at London ?

SYBIL : None but good ; my lord mayor, your father, and master Philpot, your uncle, and Master Scot, your cousin, and Mistress Frigbottom by Doctors' Commons, do all, by my troth, send you most hearty commendations.

ROSE : Did Lacy send kind greetings to his love ?

SYBIL : O yes, out of cry, by my troth. I scant knew him ; here 'a wore a scarf ; and here a scarf, here a bunch of feathers, and here precious stones and

jewels, and a pair of garters,—O, monstrous ! like one of our yellow silk curtains at home here in Old Ford house, here in Master Bellymount's chamber. I stood at our door in Cornhill, looked at him, he at me indeed, spake to him, but he not to me, not a word ; marry go-up, thought I, with a wanion ! He passed by me as proud—Marry foh ! are you grown humorous, thought I ; and so shut the door, and in I came.

ROSE : O Sybil, how dost thou my Lacy wrong !
My Rowland is as gentle as a lamb,
No dove was ever half so mild as he.

SYBIL : Mild ? yea, as a bushel of stamped crabs. He looked upon me as sour as verjuice. Go thy ways, thought I ; thou may'st be much in my gaskins, but nothing in my nether-stocks. This is your fault, mistress, to love him that loves not you ; he thinks scorn to do as he's done to ; but if I were as you, I'd cry : Go by, Jeronimo, go by !
I'd set mine old debts against my new driblets,
And the hare's foot against the goose giblets,
For if ever I sigh, when sleep I should take,
Pray God I may lose my maidenhead when I wake.

ROSE : Will my love leave me then, and go to France ?

SYBIL : I know not that, but I am sure I see him stalk before the soldiers. By my troth, he is a proper man ; but he is proper that proper doth. Let him go snick up, young mistress.

ROSE : Get thee to London, and learn perfectly,
Whether my Lacy go to France, or no.
Do this, and I will give thee for thy pains
My cambric apron and my Romish gloves,
My purple stockings and a stomacher.
Say, wilt thou do this, Sybil, for my sake ?

SYBIL : Will I, quoth a ? At whose suit ? By my troth, yes I'll go. A cambric apron, gloves, a pair of purple stockings, and a stomacher ! I'll sweat in purple, mistress, for you ; I'll take anything that comes a God's name. O rich ! a cambric apron ! Faith, then have at 'up tails all.' I'll go jiggy-joggy to London, and be here in a trice, young mistress. [*Exit.*

ROSE : Do so, good Sybil. Meantime wretched I
Will sit and sigh for his lost company. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Street in London.*

Enter ROWLAND LACY, *like a Dutch Shoemaker.*

LACY : How many shapes have gods and kings devised,
Thereby to compass their desired loves !
It is no shame for Rowland Lacy, then,
To clothe his cunning with the Gentle Craft,
That, thus disguised, I may unknown possess
The only happy presence of my Rose.
For her have I forsook my charge in France,
Incurred the king's displeasure, and stirred up
Rough hatred in mine uncle Lincoln's breast.
O love, how powerful art thou, that canst change
High birth to baseness, and a noble mind
To the mean semblance of a shoemaker !
But thus it must be. For her cruel father,
Hating the single union of our souls,

Hath secretly conveyed my Rose from London,
To bar me of her presence ; but I trust,
Fortune and this disguise will further me
Once more to view her beauty, gain her sight.
Here in Tower Street with Eyre the shoemaker
Mean I a while to work ; I know the trade,
I learnt it when I was in Wittenberg.
Then cheer thy hoping spirits, be not dismayed,
Thou canst not want : do Fortune what she can,
The Gentle Craft is living for a man. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*An open yard before* EYRE'S *House.*

Enter EYRE, *making himself ready.*

EYRE : Where be these boys, these girls, these drabs, these scoundrels ? They wallow in the fat brewis of my bounty, and lick up the crumbs of my table, yet will not rise to see my walks cleansed. Come out, you powder-beef queans ! What, Nan ! what, Madge Mumble-crust ! Come out, you fat midriff-swag-belly-whores, and sweep me these kennels that the noisome stench offend not the noses of my neighbours. What, Firk, I say ; what, Hodge ! Open my shop-windows ! What, Firk, I say !

Enter FIRK.

FIRK : O master, is't you that speak bandog and Bedlam this morning ? I was in a dream, and mused what madman was got into the street so early ; have you drunk this morning that your throat is so clear ?

EYRE : Ah, well said, Firk ; well said, Firk. To work, my fine knave, to work ! Wash thy face, and thou'lt be more blest.

FIRK : Let them wash my face that will eat it. Good master, send for a souse-wife, if you will have my face cleaner.

Enter HODGE.

EYRE : Away, sloven ! avaunt, scoundrel !—Good-morrow, Hodge ; good-morrow, my fine foreman.

HODGE : O master, good-morrow : y' are an early stirrer. Here's a fair morning.—Good-morrow, Firk, I could have slept this hour. Here's a brave day towards.

EYRE : Oh, haste to work, my fine foreman, haste to work.

FIRK : Master, I am dry as dust to hear my fellow Roger talk of fair weather ; let us pray for good leather, and let clowns and ploughboys and those that work in the fields pray for brave days. We work in a dry shop ; what care I if it rain ?

Enter MARGERY.

EYRE : How now, Dame Margery, can you see to rise ? Trip and go, call up the drabs, your maids.

MARGERY : See to rise ? I hope 'tis time enough, 'tis early enough for any woman to be seen abroad. I marvel how many wives in Tower Street are up so soon. Gods me, 'tis not noon,—here's a yawling !

EYRE : Peace, Margery, peace ! Where's Cicely Bumtrinket, your maid ? She

has a privy fault, she f—ts in her sleep. Call the quean up ; if my men want shoe-thread, I'll swinge her in a stirrup.

FIRK : Yet, that's but a dry beating ; here's still a sign of drought.

Enter LACY, *as* HANS, *singing.*

HANS : Der was een bore van Gelderland
Frolick sie byen ;
He was als dronck he cold nyet stand,
Upsolce sie byen.
Tap eens de canneken,
Drincke, schone mannekin.

FIRK : Master, for my life, yonder's a brother of the Gentle Craft ; if he bear not Saint Hugh's bones, I'll forfeit my bones ; he's some uplandish workman : hire him, good master, that I may learn some gibble-gabble ; 'twill make us work the faster.

EYRE : Peace, Firk ! A hard world ! Let him pass, let him vanish ; we have journeymen enow. Peace, my fine Firk !

MARGERY (*sarcastically*) : Nay, nay, y'are best follow your man's counsel ; you shall see what will come on't : we have not men enow, but we must entertain every butter-box ; but let that pass.

HODGE : Dame, 'fore God, if my master follow your counsel, he'll consume little beef. He shall be glad of men, an he can catch them.

FIRK : Ay, that he shall.

HODGE : 'Fore God, a proper man, and I warrant, a fine workman. Master, farewell ; dame, adieu ; if such a man as he cannot find work, Hodge is not for you. [*Offers to go.*

EYRE : Stay, my fine Hodge.

FIRK : Faith, an your foreman go, dame, you must take a journey to seek a new journeyman ; if Roger remove, Firk follows. If Saint Hugh's bones shall not be set a-work, I may prick mine awl in the walls, and go play. Fare ye well, master ; good-bye, dame.

EYRE : Tarry, my fine Hodge, my brisk foreman ! Stay, Firk !—Peace, pudding-broth ! By the Lord of Ludgate, I love my men as my life. Peace, you gallimafry !—Hodge, if he want work, I'll hire him. One of you to him ; stay,—he comes to us.

HANS : Goeden dach, meester, ende u vro oak.

FIRK : Nails if I should speak after him without drinking, I should choke. And you, friend Oake, are you of the Gentle Craft ?

HANS : Yaw, yaw, ik bin den skomawker.

FIRK : Den skomaker, quoth a ! And hark you, skomaker, have you all your tools, a good rubbing-pin, a good stopper, a good dresser, your four sorts of awls, and your two balls of wax, your paring knife, your hand- and thumb-leathers, and good St. Hugh's bones to smooth up your work ?

HANS : Yaw, yaw ; be niet vorveard. Ik hab all de dingen voour mack skooes groot and cleane.

FIRK : Ha, ha ! Good master, hire him ; he'll make me laugh so that I shall work more in mirth than I can in earnest.

EYRE : Hear ye, friend, have ye any skill in the mystery of cordwainers ?

HANS : Ik weet niet wat yow seg ; ich verstaw you niet.

FIRK : Why, thus, man : (*Imitating by gesture a shoemaker at work.*) Ich verste u niet, quoth a.

HANS : Yaw, yaw, yaw ; ick can dat wel doen.

FIRK : Yaw, yaw ! He speaks yawing like a jackdaw that gapes to be fed with

cheese-curds. Oh, he'll give a villanous pull at a can of double-beer ; but Hodge and I have the vantage, we must drink first, because we are the eldest journeymen.

EYRE : What is thy name ?

HANS : Hans—Hans Meulter.

EYRE : Give my thy hand ; th' art welcome.—Hodge, entertain him ; Firk, bid him welcome ; come, Hans. Run, wife, bid your maids, your trullibubs, make ready my fine men's breakfasts. To him, Hodge !

HODGE : Hans, th' art welcome ; use thyself friendly, for we are good fellows ; if not, thou shalt be fought with, wert thou bigger than a giant.

FIRK : Yea, and drunk with, wert thou Gargantua. My master keeps no cowards, I tell thee.—Ho, boy, bring him an heel-block, here's a new journeyman.

Enter BOY.

HANS : O, ich wersto you ; ich moet een halve dossen cans betaelen ; here, boy, nempt dis skilling, tap eens freelicke. [*Exit* BOY.

EYRE : Quick, snipper-snapper, away ! Firk, scour thy throat, thou shalt wash it with Castilian liquor.

Enter BOY.

Come, my last of the fives, give me a can. Have to thee, Hans ; here, Hodge : here, Firk ; drink, you mad Greeks, and work like true Trojans, and pray for Simon Eyre, the shoemaker.—Here, Hans, and th' art welcome.

FIRK : Lo, dame, you would have lost a good fellow that will teach us to laugh. This beer came hopping in well.

MARGERY : Simon, it is almost seven.

EYRE : Is't so, Dame Clapper-dudgeon ? Is't seven a clock, and my men's breakfast not ready ? Trip and go, you soused conger, away ! Come, you mad hyperboreans ; follow me, Hodge ; follow me, Hans ; come after, my fine Firk ; to work, to work a while, and then to breakfast ! [*Exit.*

FIRK : Soft ! Yaw, yaw, good Hans, though my master have no more wit but to call you afore me, I am not so foolish to go behind you, I being the elder journeyman. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Field near Old Ford.*

Holloaing within. Enter MASTER WARNER *and* MASTER HAMMON, *attired as Hunters.*

HAMMON : Cousin, beat every brake, the game's not far,
This way with wingèd feet he fled from death,
Whilst the pursuing hounds, scenting his steps,
Find out his highway to destruction.
Besides, the miller's boy told me even now,
He saw him take soil, and he holloaed him,
Affirming him to have been so embost
That long he could not hold.

WARNER : If it be so,
'Tis best we trace these meadows by Old Ford.

A noise of Hunters within. Enter a BOY.

HAMMON : How now, boy ? Where's the deer ? speak, saw'st thou him ?

BOY : O yea ; I saw him leap through a hedge, and then over a ditch, then at my lord mayor's pale. Over he skipped me, and in he went me, and "holla" the hunters cried, and "there, boy ; there, boy !" But there he is, 'a mine honesty.

HAMMON : Boy, God amercy. Cousin, let's away.
I hope we shall find better sport to-day. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*Another part of the Field.*

Hunting within. Enter ROSE *and* SYBIL.

ROSE : Why, Sybil, wilt thou prove a forester ?

SYBIL : Upon some, no ; forester, go by ; no, faith, mistress. The deer came running into the barn through the orchard and over the pale ; I wot well, I looked as pale as a new cheese to see him. But whip, says goodman Pinclose, up with his flail, and our Nick with a prong, and down he fell, and they upon him, and I upon them. By my troth, we had such sport ; and in the end we ended him ; his throat we cut, flayed him, unhorned him, and my lord mayor shall eat of him anon, when he comes. [*Horns sound within.*

ROSE : Hark, hark, the hunters come ; y' are best take heed,
They'll have a saying to you for this deed.

Enter MASTER HAMMON, MASTER WARNER, HUNTSMEN, *and* BOY.

HAMMON : God save you, fair ladies.
SYBIL : Ladies ! O gross !
WARNER : Came not a buck this way ?
ROSE : No, but two does.
HAMMON : And which way went they ? Faith, we'll hunt at those.
SYBIL : At those ? upon some, no : when, can you tell ?
WARNER : Upon some, ay.
SYBIL : Good Lord !
WARNER : Wounds ! Then farewell !
HAMMON : Boy, which way went he ?
BOY : This way, sir, he ran.
HAMMON : This way he ran indeed, fair Mistress Rose ;
Our game was lately in your orchard seen.
WARNER : Can you advise, which way he took his flight ?
SYBIL : Follow your nose ; his horns will guide you right.
WARNER : Th' art a mad wench.
SYBIL : O, rich !
ROSE : Trust me, not I.
It is not like that the wild forest-deer
Would come so near to places of resort ;
You are deceived, he fled some other way.
WARNER : Which way, my sugar-candy, can you shew ?
SYBIL : Come up, good honeysops, upon some, no.
ROSE : Why do you stay, and not pursue your game ?
SYBIL : I'll hold my life, their hunting-nags be lame.
HAMMON : A deer more dear is found within this place.
ROSE : But not the deer, sir, which you had in chase.
HAMMON : I chased the deer, but this dear chaseth me.

ROSE : The strangest hunting that ever I see.
But where's your park ? [*She offers to go away.*
HAMMON : [My park ?] 'Tis here : O stay !
ROSE : Impale me [in't], and then I will not stray.
WARNER : They wrangle, wench ; we are more kind than they.
SYBIL : What kind of hart is that dear heart, you seek ?
WARNER : A hart, dear heart.
SYBIL : Who ever saw the like ?
ROSE : To lose your heart, is't possible you can ?
HAMMON : My heart is lost.
ROSE : Alack, good gentleman !
HAMMON : This poor lost heart would I wish you might find.
ROSE : You, by such luck, might prove your hart a hind.
HAMMON : Why, Luck had horns, so have I heard some say.
ROSE : Now, God, an't be his will, send Luck into your way.

Enter the LORD MAYOR *and* SERVANTS.

LORD MAYOR : What, Master Hammon ? Welcome to Old Ford !
SYBIL : Gods pittikins, hands off, sir ! Here's my lord.
LORD MAYOR : I hear you had ill luck, and lost your game.
HAMMON : 'Tis true, my lord.
LORD MAYOR : I am sorry for the same.
What gentleman is this ?
HAMMON : My brother-in-law.
LORD MAYOR : Y'are welcome both ; sith Fortune offers you
Into my hands, you shall not part from hence,
Until you have refreshed your wearied limbs.—
Go, Sybil, cover the board !—You shall be guest
To no good cheer, but even a hunter's feast.
HAMMON : I thank your lordship.—Cousin, on my life,
For our lost venison I shall find a wife. [*Exeunt.*
LORD MAYOR : In, gentlemen ; I'll not be absent long.—
This Hammon is a proper gentleman,
A citizen by birth, fairly allied ;
How fit an husband were he for my girl !
Well, I will in, and do the best I can,
To match my daughter to this gentleman. [*Exit.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—*A Room in* EYRE'S *House.*

Enter HANS, SKIPPER, HODGE, *and* FIRK.

SKIPPER : Ick sal yow wat seggen, Hans ; dis skip, dat comen from Candy, is al vol, by Got's sacrament, van sugar, civet, almonds, cambrick, end alle dingen, towsand towsand ding. Nempt it, Hans, nempt it vor v meester. Daer be de bils van laden. Your meester Simon Eyre sal hae good copen. Wat seggen yow, Hans ?
FIRK : Wat seggen de reggen, de copen slopen—laugh, Hodge, laugh !
HANS : Mine liever broder Firk, bringt Meester Eyre tot det signe vn Swannekin ; daer sal yow finde dis skipper end me. Wat seggen yow, broder Firk ? Doot it, Hodge. Come, skipper. [*Exeunt* HANS *and* SKIPPER.

FIRK : Bring him, quoth you ? Here's no knavery, to bring my master to buy a ship worth the lading of two or three hundred thousand pounds. Alas, that's nothing ; a trifle, a bauble, Hodge.

HODGE : The truth is, Firk, that the merchant owner of the ship dares not shew his head, and therefore this skipper that deals for him, for the love he bears to Hans, offers my master Eyre a bargain in the commodities. He shall have a reasonable day of payment ; he may sell the wares by that time, and be an huge gainer himself.

FIRK : Yea, but can my fellow Hans lend my master twenty porpentines as an earnest penny ?

HODGE : Portegues, thou wouldst say ; here they be, Firk ; hark, they jingle in my pocket like St. Mary Overy's bells.

Enter EYRE *and* MARGERY.

FIRK : Mum, here comes my dame and my master. She'll scold, on my life, for loitering this Monday ; but all's one, let them all say what they can, Monday's our holiday.

MARGERY : You sing, Sir Sauce, but I beshrew your heart,
I fear, for this your singing we shall smart.

FIRK : Smart for me, dame ; why, dame, why ?

HODGE : Master, I hope you'll not suffer my dame to take down your journeymen.

FIRK : If she take me down, I'll take her up ; yea, and take her down too, a button-hole lower.

EYRE : Peace, Firk ; not I, Hodge ; by the life of Pharaoh, by the Lord of Ludgate, by this beard, every hair whereof I value at a king's ransom, she shall not meddle with you.—Peace, you bombast-cotton-candle-quean ; away, queen of clubs ; quarrel not with me and my men, with me and my fine Firk ; I'll firk you, if you do.

MARGERY : Yea, yea, man, you may use me as you please ; but let that pass.

EYRE : Let it pass, let it vanish away ; peace ! Am I not Simon Eyre ? Are not these my brave men, brave shoemakers, all gentlemen of the Gentle Craft ? Prince am I none, yet am I nobly born, as being the sole son of a shoemaker. Away, rubbish ! vanish, melt ; melt like kitchen-stuff.

MARGERY : Yea, yea, 'tis well ; I must be called rubbish, kitchen-stuff, for a sort of knaves.

FIRK : Nay, dame, you shall not weep and wail in woe for me. Master, I'll stay no longer ; here's an inventory of my shop-tools. Adieu, master ; Hodge, farewell.

HODGE : Nay, stay, Firk ; thou shalt not go alone.

MARGERY : I pray, let them go ; there be more maids than Mawkin, more men than Hodge, and more fools than Firk.

FIRK : Fools ? Nails ! if I tarry now, I would my guts might be turned to shoe-thread.

HODGE : And if I stay, I pray God I may be turned to a Turk, and set in Finsbury for boys to shoot at.—Come, Firk.

EYRE : Stay, my fine knaves, you arms of my trade, you pillars of my profession. What, shall a tittle-tattle's words make you forsake Simon Eyre ?—Avaunt, kitchen-stuff ! Rip, you brown-bread Tannikin ; out of my sight ! Move me not ! Have not I ta'en you from selling tripes in Eastcheap, and set you in my shop, and made you hail-fellow with Simon Eyre, the shoemaker ? And now do you deal thus with my journeymen ? Look, you powder-beef-quean, on the face of Hodge, here's a face for a lord.

FIRK : And here's a face for any lady in Christendom.

EYRE : Rip, you chitterling, avaunt ! Boy, bid the tapster of the Boar's Head fill me a dozen cans of beer for my journeymen.

FIRK : A dozen, cans ? O brave ! Hodge, now I'll stay.

EYRE (*aside to the* BOY) : An the knave fills any more than two, he pays for them. (*Exit* BOY. *Aloud.*) A dozen cans of beer for my journeymen. (*Re-enter* BOY.) Here, you mad Mesopotamians, wash your livers with this liquor. Where be the odd ten ? (*Aside*) No more, Madge, no more.—Well said. Drink and to work !—What work dost thou, Hodge ? what work ?

HODGE : I am a-making a pair of shoes for my lord mayor's daughter, Mistress Rose.

FIRK : And I a pair of shoes for Sybil, my lord's maid. I deal with her.

EYRE : Sybil ? Fie, defile not thy fine workmanly fingers with the feet of kitchen-stuff and basting-ladles. Ladies of the court, fine ladies, my lads, commit their feet to our apparelling ; put gross work to Hans. Yark and seam, yark and seam !

FIRK : For yarking and seaming let me alone, an I come to 't.

HODGE : Well, master, all this is from the bias. Do you remember the ship my fellow Hans told you of ? The skipper and he are both drinking at the Swan. Here be the Portigues to give earnest. If you go through with it, you cannot choose but be a lord at least.

FIRK : Nay, dame, if my master prove not a lord, and you a lady, hang me.

MARGERY : Yea, like enough, if you may loiter and tipple thus.

FIRK : Tipple, dame ? No, we have been bargaining with Skellum Skanderbag : can you Dutch spreaken for a ship of silk Cyprus, laden with sugar-candy ?

Enter the BOY *with a velvet coat and an Alderman's gown.* EYRE *puts them on.*

EYRE : Peace, Firk ; silence, Tittle-tattle ! Hodge, I'll go through with it. Here's a seal-ring, and I have sent for a guarded gown and a damask cassock. See where it comes ; look here, Maggy ; help me, Firk ; apparel me, Hodge ; silk and satin, you mad Philistines, silk and satin.

FIRK : Ha, ha, my master will be as proud as a dog in a doublet, all in beaten damask and velvet.

EYRE : Softly, Firk, for rearing of the nap, and wearing threadbare my garments. How dost thou like me, Firk ? How do I look, my fine Hodge ?

HODGE : Why, now you look like yourself, master. I warrant you, there's few in the city, but will give you the wall, and come upon you with the right worshipful.

FIRK : Nails, my master looks like a threadbare cloak new turned and dressed. Lord, Lord, to see what good raiment doth ! Dame, dame, are you not enamoured ?

EYRE : How say'st thou, Maggy, am I not brisk ? Am I not fine ?

MARGERY : Fine ? By my troth, sweetheart, very fine ! By my troth, I never liked thee so well in my life, sweetheart ; but let that pass. I warrant, there be many women in the city have not such handsome husbands, but only for their apparel ; but let that pass too.

Re-enter HANS *and* SKIPPER.

HANS : Godden day, mester. Dis be de skipper dat heb de skip van marchandice ; de commodity ben good ; nempt it, master, nempt it.

EYRE : Godamercy, Hans ; welcome, skipper. Where lies this ship of merchandise ?

SKIPPER : De skip ben in revere ; dor be van sugar, cyvet, almonds, cambrick, and a towsand towsand tings, gotz sacrament ; nempt it, mester : ye sal heb good copen.

FIRK : To him, master ! O sweet master ! O sweet wares ! Prunes, almonds, sugar-candy, carrot-roots, turnips, O brave fatting meat ! Let not a man buy a nutmeg but yourself.

EYRE : Peace, Firk ! Come, skipper, I'll go aboard with you.—Hans, have you made him drink ?

SKIPPER : Yaw, yaw, ic heb veale gedrunck.

EYRE : Come, Hans, follow me. Skipper, thou shalt have my countenance in the city. [*Exeunt.*

FIRK : Yaw, heb veale gedrunck, quoth a. They may well be called butter-boxes, when they drink fat veal and thick beer too. But come, dame, I hope you'll chide us no more.

MARGERY : No, faith, Firk ; no, perdy, Hodge. I do feel honour creep upon me, and which is more, a certain rising in my flesh ; but let that pass.

FIRK : Rising in your flesh do you feel, say you ? Ay, you may be with child, but why should not my master feel a rising in his flesh, having a gown and a gold ring on ? But you are such a shrew, you'll soon pull him down.

MARGERY : Ha, ha ! prithee, peace ! Thou mak'st my worship laugh ; but let that pass. Come, I'll go in ; Hodge, prithee, go before me ; Firk, follow me.

FIRK : Firk doth follow : Hodge, pass out in state. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*London : a Room in* LINCOLN'S *House.*

Enter the EARL OF LINCOLN *and* DODGER.

LINCOLN : How now, good Dodger, what's the news in France ?

DODGER : My lord, upon the eighteenth day of May
The French and English were prepared to fight ;
Each side with eager fury gave the sign
Of a most hot encounter. Five long hours
Both armies fought together ; at the length
The lot of victory fell on our sides,
Twelve thousand of the Frenchmen that day died,
Four thousand English, and no man of name
But Captain Hyam and young Ardington,
Two gallant gentlemen, I knew them well.

LINCOLN : But Dodger, prithee, tell me, in this fight
How did my cousin Lacy bear himself ?

DODGER : My lord, your cousin Lacy was not there.

LINCOLN : Not there ?

DODGER : No, my good lord.

LINCOLN : Sure, thou mistakest.
I saw him shipped, and a thousand eyes beside
Were witnesses of the farewells which he gave,
When I, with weeping eyes, bid him adieu.
Dodger, take heed.

DODGER : My lord, I am advised,
That what I spake is true : to prove it so,
His cousin Askew, that supplied his place,

Sent me for him from France, that secretly
He might convey himself thither.
LINCOLN : Is't even so ?
Dares he so carelessly venture his life
Upon the indignation of a king ?
Has he despised my love, and spurned those favours
Which I with prodigal hand poured on his head ?
He shall repent his rashness with his soul ;
Since of my love he makes no estimate,
I'll make him wish he had not known my hate.
Thou hast no other news ?
DODGER : None else, my lord.
LINCOLN : None worse I know thou hast.—Procure the king
To crown his giddy brows with ample honours,
Send him chief colonel, and all my hope
Thus to be dashed ! But it's in vain to grieve,
One evil cannot a worse [one] relieve.
Upon my life, I have found out his plot ;
That old dog, Love, that fawned upon him so,
Love to that puling girl, his fair-cheeked Rose,
The lord mayor's daughter, hath distracted him,
And in the fire of that love's lunacy
Hath he burnt up himself, consumed his credit,
Lost the king's love, yea, and I fear, his life,
Only to get a wanton to his wife,
Dodger, it is so.
DODGER : I fear so, my good lord.
LINCOLN : It is so—nay, sure it cannot be !
I am at my wits' end. Dodger !
DODGER : Yea, my lord.
LINCOLN : Thou art acquainted with my nephew's haunts ;
Spend this gold for thy pains ; go seek him out ;
Watch at my lord mayor's—there if he live,
Dodger, thou shalt be sure to meet with him.
Prithee, be diligent.—Lacy, thy name
Lived once in honour, now ['tis] dead in shame.—
Be circumspect. [*Exit.*
DODGER : I warrant you, my lord. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*London : a Room in the* LORD MAYOR'S *House.*

Enter the LORD MAYOR *and* MASTER SCOTT.

LORD MAYOR : Good Master Scott, I have been bold with you,
To be a witness to a wedding-knot
Betwixt young Master Hammon and my daughter.
O, stand aside ; see where the lovers come.

Enter MASTER HAMMON *and* ROSE.

ROSE : Can it be possible you love me so ?
No, no, within those eyeballs I espy
Apparent likelihoods of flattery.
Pray now, let go my hand.

HAMMON : Sweet Mistress Rose,
Misconstrue not my words, nor misconceive
Of my affection, whose devoted soul
Swears that I love thee dearer than my heart.

ROSE : As dear as your own heart ? I judge it right ;
Men love their hearts best when th' are out of sight.

HAMMON : I love you, by this hand.
ROSE : Yet hands off now !
If flesh be frail, how weak and frail's your vow !

HAMMON : Then by my life I swear.
ROSE : Then do not brawl ;
One quarrel loseth wife and life and all.
Is not your meaning thus ?
HAMMON : In faith, you jest.

ROSE : Love loves to sport ; therefore leave love, y' are best.
LORD MAYOR : What ? square they, Master Scott ?
SCOTT : Sir, never doubt,
Lovers are quickly in, and quickly out.

HAMMON : Sweet Rose, be not so strange in fancying me.
Nay, never turn aside, shun not my sight :
I am not grown so fond, to fond my love
On any that shall quit it with disdain ;
If you will love me, so—if not, farewell.

LORD MAYOR : Why, how now, lovers, are you both agreed ?

HAMMON : Yes, faith, my lord.
LORD MAYOR : 'Tis well, give me your hand.
Give me yours, daughter.—How now, both pull back ?
What means this, girl ?
ROSE : I mean to live a maid.
HAMMON : (*Aside.*) But not to die one ; pause, ere that be said.

LORD MAYOR : Will you still cross me, still be obstinate ?
HAMMON : Nay, chide her not, my lord, for doing well ;
If she can live an happy virgin's life,
'Tis far more blessed than to be a wife.

ROSE : Say, sir, I cannot : I have made a vow,
Whoever be my husband, 'tis not you.
LORD MAYOR : Your tongue is quick ; but Master Hammon, know,
I bade you welcome to another end.

HAMMON : What, would you have me pule and pine and pray,
With ' lovely lady,' ' mistress of my heart,'
' Pardon your servant,' and the rhymer play,
Railing on Cupid and his tyrant's-dart ;
Or shall I undertake some martial spoil,
Wearing your glove at tourney and at tilt,
And tell how many gallants I unhorsed—
Sweet, will this pleasure you ?
ROSE : Yea, when wilt begin ?
What, love rhymes, man ? Fie on that deadly sin !
LORD MAYOR : If you will have her, I'll make her agree.

HAMMON : Enforced love is worse than hate to me.
(*Aside.*) There is a wench keeps shop in the Old Change,
To her will I ; it is not wealth I seek,

I have enough, and will prefer her love
Before the world.—(*Aloud.*) My good lord mayor, adieu.
Old love for me, I have no luck with new. [*Exit.*
RD MAYOR : Now, mammet, you have well behaved yourself,
But you shall curse your coyness if I live.—
Who's within there ? See you convey your mistress
Straight to th' Old Ford ! I'll keep you straight enough
Fore God, I would have sworn the puling girl
Would willingly accept of Hammon's love ;
But banish him, my thoughts !—Go, minion, in ! [*Exit* ROSE.
Now tell me, Master Scott, would you have thought
That Master Simon Eyre, the shoemaker,
Had been of wealth to buy such merchandise ?
OTT : 'Twas well, my lord, your honour and myself
Grew partners with him ; for your bills of lading
Shew that Eyre's gains in one commodity
Rise at the least to full three thousand pound
Besides like gain in other merchandise.
RD MAYOR : Well, he shall spend some of his thousands now,
For I have sent for him to the Guildhall.

Enter EYRE.

See, where he comes. Good morrow, Master Eyre.
RE : Poor Simon Eyre, my lord, your shoemaker.
RD MAYOR : Well, well, it likes yourself to term you so.

Enter DODGER.

Now, Master Dodger, what's the news with you ?
DGER : I'd gladly speak in private to your honour.
RD MAYOR : You shall, you shall.—Master Eyre and Master Scott,
I have some business with this gentleman ;
I pray, let me entreat you to walk before
To the Guildhall ; I'll follow presently.
Master Eyre, I hope ere noon to call you sheriff.
RE : I would not care, my lord, if you might call me King of Spain.—Come,
Master Scott. [*Exeunt* EYRE *and* SCOTT.
RD MAYOR : Now, Master Dodger, what's the news you bring ?
DGER : The Earl of Lincoln by me greets your lordship,
And earnestly requests you, if you can,
Inform him, where his nephew Lacy keeps.
RD MAYOR : Is not his nephew Lacy now in France ?
DGER : No, I assure your lordship, but disguised
Lurks here in London.
RD MAYOR : . London ? is 't even so ?
It may be ; but upon my faith and soul,
I know not where he lives, or whether he lives :
So tell my Lord of Lincoln.—Lurks in London ?
Well, Master Dodger, you perhaps may start him ;
Be but the means to rid him into France,
I'll give you a dozen angels for your pains :
So much I love his honour, hate his nephew.
And, prithee, so inform thy lord from me.

DODGER : I take my leave. [*Exit* DODGER.

LORD MAYOR : Farewell, good Master Dodger.
Lacy in London ? I dare pawn my life,
My daughter knows thereof, and for that cause
Denied young Master Hammon in his love.
Well, I am glad I sent her to Old Ford.
Gods Lord, 'tis late ; to Guildhall I must hie ;
I know my brethren stay my company. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*London : a Room in* EYRE'S *House.*

Enter FIRK, MARGERY, HANS, *and* HODGE.

MARGERY : Thou goest too fast for me, Roger. O, Firk !

FIRK : Ay, forsooth.

MARGERY : I pray thee, run—do you hear ?—run to Guildhall, and learn if my husband, Master Eyre, will take that worshipful vocation of Master Sheriff upon him. Hie thee, good Firk.

FIRK : Take it ? Well, I go ; an he should not take it, Firk swears to forswear him. Yes, forsooth, I go to Guildhall.

MARGERY : Nay, when ? thou art too compendious and tedious.

FIRK : O rare, your excellence is full of eloquence. (*Aside.*) How like a new cart-wheel my dame speaks, and she looks like an old musty ale-bottle going to scalding.

MARGERY : Nay, when ? thou wilt make me melancholy.

FIRK : God forbid your worship should fall into that humour ;—I run. [*Exit.*

MARGERY : Let me see now, Roger and Hans.

HODGE : Ay, forsooth, dame—mistress I should say, but the old term so sticks to the roof of my mouth, I can hardly lick it off.

MARGERY : Even what thou wilt, good Roger ; dame is a fair name for any honest Christian ; but let that pass. How dost thou, Hans ?

HANS : Mee tanck you, vro.

MARGERY : Well, Hans and Roger, you see, God hath blest your master, and, perdy, if ever he comes to be Master Sheriff of London—as we are all mortal —you shall see, I will have some odd thing or other in a corner for you : I will not be your back-friend ; but let that pass. Hans, pray thee, tie my shoe.

HANS : Yaw, ic sal, vro.

MARGERY : Roger, thou know'st the length of my foot ; as it is none of the biggest, so I thank God, it is handsome enough ; prithee, let me have a pair of shoes made, cork, good Roger, wooden heel too.

HODGE : You shall.

MARGERY : Art thou acquainted with never a farthingale-maker, nor a French hood-maker ? I must enlarge my bum, ha, ha ! How shall I look in a hood, I wonder ! Perdy, oddly, I think.

HODGE (*aside*) : As a cat out of a pillory.—Very well, I warrant you, mistress.

MARGERY : Indeed, all flesh is grass ; and, Roger, canst thou tell where I may buy a good hair ?

HODGE : Yes, forsooth, at the poulterer's in Gracious Street.

MARGERY : Thou art an ungracious wag ; perdy, I mean a false hair for my periwig.

HODGE : Why, mistress, the next time I cut my beard, you shall have the shavings of it ; but they are all true hairs.

MARGERY : It is very hot, I must get me a fan or else a mask.
HODGE (*aside*) : So you had need, to hide your wicked face.
MARGERY : Fie, upon it, how costly this world's calling is ; perdy, but that it is one of the wonderful works of God, I would not deal with it. Is not Firk come yet ? Hans, be not so sad, let it pass and vanish, as my husband's worship says.
HANS : Ick bin vrolicke, lot see yow soo.
HODGE : Mistress, will you drink a pipe of tobacco ?
MARGERY : Oh, fie upon it. Roger, perdy ! These filthy tobacco-pipes are the most idle slavering baubles that ever I felt. Out upon it ! God bless us, men look not like men that use them.

Enter RALPH, *being lame.*

HODGE : What, fellow Ralph ? Mistress, look here, Jane's husband ! Why, how now, lame ? Hans, make much of him, he's a brother of our trade, a good workman, and a tall soldier.
HANS : You be welcome, broder.
MARGERY : Perdy, I knew him not. How dost thou, good Ralph ? I am glad to see thee well.
RALPH : I would [to] God you saw me, dame, as well
As when I went from London into France.
MARGERY : Trust me, I am sorry, Ralph, to see thee impotent. Lord, how the wars have made him sunburnt ! The left leg is not well ; 'twas a fair gift of God the infirmity took not hold a little higher, considering thou camest from France ; but let that pass.
RALPH : I am glad to see you well, and I rejoice
To hear that God hath blest my master so
Since my departure.
MARGERY : Yea, truly, Ralph, I thank my Maker ; but let that pass.
HODGE : And, sirrah Ralph, what news, what news in France ?
RALPH : Tell me, good Roger, first, what news in England ?
How does my Jane ? When didst thou see my wife ?
Where lives my poor heart ? She'll be poor indeed,
Now I want limbs to get whereon to feed.
HODGE : Limbs ? Hast thou not hands, man ? Thou shalt never see a shoemaker want bread, though he have but three fingers on a hand.
RALPH : Yet all this while I hear not of my Jane.
MARGERY : O Ralph, your wife,—perdy, we know not what's become of her. She was here a while, and because she was married, grew more stately than became her ; I checked her, and so forth ; away she flung, never returned, nor said bye nor bah ; and, Ralph, you know, " ka me, ka thee." And so, as I tell ye— Roger, is not Firk come yet ?
HODGE : No, forsooth.
MARGERY : And so, indeed, we heard not of her, but I hear she lives in London ; but let that pass. If she had wanted, she might have opened her case to me or my husband, or to any of my men ; I am sure, there's not any of them, perdy, but would have done her good to his power. Hans, look if Firk be come.
HANS : Yaw, ik sal, vro. [*Exit* HANS.
MARGERY : And so, as I said—but, Ralph, why dost thou weep ? Thou knowest that naked we came out of our mother's womb, and naked we must return ; and, therefore, thank God for all things.

HODGE : No, faith, Jane is a stranger here ; but, Ralph, pull up a good heart, I know thou hast one. Thy wife, man, is in London ; one told me, he saw her a while ago very brave and neat ; we'll ferret her out, an London hold her.

MARGERY : Alas, poor soul, he's overcome with sorrow ; he does but as I do, weep for the loss of any good thing. But, Ralph, get thee in, call for some meat and drink, thou shalt find me worshipful towards thee.

RALPH : I thank you, dame ; since I want limbs and lands,
I'll trust to God, my good friends, and my hands. [*Exit.*

Enter HANS *and* FIRK *running.*

FIRK : Run, good Hans ! O Hodge, O mistress ! Hodge, heave up thine ears ; mistress, smug up your looks ; on with your best apparel ; my master is chosen, my master is called, nay, condemned by the cry of the country to be sheriff of the city for this famous year now to come. And time now being, a great many men in black gowns were asked for their voices and their hands, and my master had all their fists about his ears presently, and they cried 'Ay, ay, ay, ay,"—and so I came away—

Wherefore without all other grieve
I do salute you, Mistress Shrieve.

HANS : Yaw, my mester is de groot man, de shrieve.

HODGE : Did not I tell you, mistress ? Now I may boldly say : Good-morrow to your worship.

MARGERY : Good-morrow, good Roger. I thank you, my good people all.—Firk, hold up thy hand : here's a threepenny piece for thy tidings.

FIRK : 'Tis but three-half-pence, I think. Yes, 'tis three-pence, I smell the rose.

HODGE : But, mistress, be ruled by me, and do not speak so pulingly.

FIRK : 'Tis her worship speaks so, and not she. No, faith, mistress, speak me in the old key : "To it, Firk," "there, good Firk," "ply your business, Hodge," "Hodge, with a full mouth," "I'll fill your bellies with good cheer, till they cry twang."

Enter EYRE *wearing a gold chain.*

HANS : See, myn liever broder, heer compt my meester.

MARGERY : Welcome home, Master Shrieve ; I pray God continue you in health and wealth.

EYRE : See here, my Maggy, a chain, a gold chain for Simon Eyre. I shall make thee a lady ; here's a French hood for thee ; on with it, on with it ! dress thy brows with this flap of a shoulder of mutton, to make thee look lovely. Where be my fine men ? Roger, I'll make over my shop and tools to thee ; Firk, thou shalt be the foreman ; Hans, thou shalt have an hundred for twenty. Be as mad knaves as your master Sim Eyre hath been, and you shall live to be Sheriffs of London.—How dost thou like me, Margery ? Prince am I none, yet am I princely born. Firk, Hodge, and Hans !

ALL THREE : Ay, forsooth, what says your worship, Master Sheriff ?

EYRE : Worship and honour, you Babylonian knaves, for the Gentle Craft. But I forgot myself, I am bidden by my lord mayor to dinner to Old Ford ; he's gone before, I must after. Come, Madge, on with your trinkets ! Now, my true Trojans, my fine Firk, my dapper Hodge, my honest Hans, some device, some odd crotchets, some morris, or such like, for the honour of the gentlemen shoemakers. Meet me at Old Ford, you know my mind. Come, Madgy, away. Shut up the shop, knaves, and make holiday. [*Exeunt.*

IRK : O rare ! O brave ! Come, Hodge ; follow me, Hans ;
We'll be with them for a morris-dance. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*A Room at Old Ford.*

Enter the LORD MAYOR, ROSE, EYRE, MARGERY *in a French hood*, SYBIL, *and other* SERVANTS.

LORD MAYOR : Trust me, you are as welcome to Old Ford
As I myself.
MARGERY : Truly, I thank your lordship.
LORD MAYOR : Would our bad cheer were worth the thanks you give.
EYRE : Good cheer, my lord mayor, fine cheer !
A fine house, fine walls, all fine and neat.
LORD MAYOR : Now, by my troth, I'll tell thee, Master Eyre.
It does me good, and all my brethren,
That such a madcap fellow as thyself
Is entered into our society.
MARGERY : Ay, but, my lord, he must learn now to put on gravity.
EYRE : Peace, Maggy, a fig for gravity ! When I go to Guildhall in my scarlet gown, I'll look as demurely as a saint, and speak as gravely as a justice of peace ; but now I am here at Old Ford, at my good lord mayor's house, let it go by, vanish, Maggy, I'll be merry ; away with flip-flap, these fooleries, these gulleries. What, honey ? Prince am I none, yet am I princely born. What says my lord mayor ?
LORD MAYOR : Ha, ha, ha ! I had rather than a thousand pound,
I had an heart but half so light as yours.
EYRE : Why, what should I do, my lord ? A pound of care pays not a dram of debt. Hum, let's be merry, whiles we are young ; old age, sack and sugar will steal upon us, ere we be aware.
LORD MAYOR : It's well done ; Mistress Eyre, pray give good council
To my daughter.
MARGERY : I hope, Mistress Rose will have the grace to take nothing that's bad.
LORD MAYOR : Pray God she do ; for i' faith, Mistress Eyre,
I would bestow upon that peevish girl
A thousand marks more than I mean to give her
Upon condition she'd be ruled by me.
The ape still crosseth me. There came of late
A proper gentleman of fair revenues,
Whom gladly I would call [a] son-in-law :
But my fine cockney would have none of him.
You'll prove a coxcomb for it, ere you die :
A courtier, or no man must please your eye.
EYRE : Be ruled, sweet Rose : th' art ripe for a man. Marry not with a boy that has no more hair on his face than thou hast on thy cheeks. A courtier ? wash, go by ! stand not upon pishery-pashery : those silken fellows are but painted images, outsides, outsides, Rose ; their inner linings are torn. No, my fine mouse, marry me with a gentleman grocer like my lord mayor, your father ; a grocer is a sweet trade : plums, plums. Had I a son or daughter should marry out of the generation and blood of the shoemakers, he should pack ; what, the Gentle Trade is a living for a man through Europe, through the world.

[*A noise within of a tabor and a pipe.*

LORD MAYOR : What noise is this ?
EYRE : O my lord mayor, a crew of good fellows that for love to your honour are come hither with a morris-dance. Come in, my Mesopotamians, cheerily.

Enter HODGE, HANS, RALPH, FIRK, *and other Shoemakers, in a morris ; after a little dancing the* LORD MAYOR *speaks.*

LORD MAYOR : Master Eyre, are all these shoemakers ?
EYRE : All cordwainers, my good lord mayor.
ROSE (*aside*) : How like my Lacy looks yond' shoemaker !
HANS (*aside*) : O that I durst but speak unto my love !
LORD MAYOR : Sybil, go fetch some wine to make these drink.
You are all welcome.
ALL : We thank your lordship.
[ROSE *takes a cup of wine and goes to* HANS.
ROSE : For his sake whose fair shape thou represent'st,
Good friend, I drink to thee.
HANS : Ic bedancke, good frister.
MARGERY : I see, Mistress Rose, you do not want judgment ; you have drunk to the properest man I keep.
FIRK : Here be some have done their parts to be as proper as he.
LORD MAYOR : Well, urgent business calls me back to London :
Good fellows, first go in and taste our cheer ;
And to make merry as you homeward go,
Spend these two angels in beer at Stratford-Bow.
EYRE : To these two, my mad lads, Sim Eyre adds another ; then cheerily, Firk ; tickle it, Hans, and all for the honour of shoemakers.
[*All go dancing out.*
LORD MAYOR : Come, Master Eyre, let's have your company. [*Exeunt.*
ROSE : Sybil, what shall I do ?
SYBIL : Why, what's the matter ?
ROSE : That Hans the shoemaker is my love Lacy,
Disguised in that attire to find me out.
How should I find the means to speak with him ?
SYBIL : What, mistress, never fear ; I dare venture my maidenhead to nothing, and that's great odds, that Hans the Dutchman, when we come to London, shall not only see and speak with you, but in spite of all your father's policies steal you away and marry you. Will not this please you ?
ROSE : Do this, and ever be assured of my love.
SYBIL : Away, then, and follow your father to London, lest your absence cause him to suspect something :
To-morrow, if my counsel be obeyed,
I'll bind you prentice to the Gentle Trade.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*A Street in London.*

JANE *in a Seamster's shop, working. Enter* MASTER HAMMON, *muffled ; he stands aloof.*

HAMMON : Yonder's the shop, and there my fair love sits.
She's fair and lovely, but she is not mine.
O, would she were ! Thrice have I courted her,

Thrice hath my hand been moistened with her hand,
Whilst my poor famished eyes do feed on that
Which made them famish. I am infortunate :
I still love one, yet nobody loves me.
I muse, in other men what women see,
That I so want ! Fine Mistress Rose was coy,
And this too curious ! Oh, no, she is chaste,
And for she thinks me wanton, she denies
To cheer my cold heart with her sunny eyes.
How prettily she works, oh pretty hand !
Oh happy work ! It doth me good to stand
Unseen to see her. Thus I oft have stood
In frosty evenings, a light burning by her,
Enduring biting cold, only to eye her.
One only look hath seemed as rich to me
As a king's crown ; such is love's lunacy.
Muffled I'll pass along, and by that try
Whether she know me.

JANE : Sir, what is't you buy ?
What is't you lack, sir, calico, or lawn,
Fine cambric shirts, or bands, what will you buy ?

HAMMON (*aside*) : That which thou wilt not sell.
Faith, yet I'll try :
How do you sell this handkercher ?

JANE : Good cheap.

HAMMON : And how these ruffs ?

JANE : Cheap too.

HAMMON : And how this band ?

JANE : Cheap too.

HAMMON : All cheap ; how sell you then this hand ?

JANE : My hands are not to be sold.

HAMMON : To be given then !
Nay, faith, I come to buy.

JANE : But none knows when.

HAMMON : Good sweet, leave work a little while ; let's play.

JANE : I cannot live by keeping holiday.

HAMMON : I'll pay you for the time which shall be lost.

JANE : With me you shall not be at so much cost.

HAMMON : Look, how you wound this cloth, so you wound me.

JANE : It may be so.

HAMMON : 'Tis so.

JANE : What remedy ?

HAMMON : Nay, faith, you are too coy.

JANE : Let go my hand.

HAMMON : I will do any task at your command ;
I would let go this beauty, were I not
In mind to disobey you by a power
That controls kings : I love you !

JANE : So, now part.

HAMMON : With hands I may, but never with my heart.
In faith, I love you.

JANE : I believe you do.

HAMMON : Shall a true love in me breed hate in you ?

JANE : I hate you not.
HAMMON : Then you must love.
JANE : I do.
What are you better now ? I love not you.

HAMMON : All this, I hope, is but a woman's fray,
That means : come to me, when she cries : away !
In earnest, mistress, I do not jest,
A true chaste love hath entered in my breast.
I love you dearly, as I love my life,
I love you as a husband loves a wife ;
That, and no other love, my love requires.
Thy wealth, I know, is little ; my desires
Thirst not for gold. Sweet, beauteous Jane, what's mine
Shall, if thou make myself thine, all be thine.
Say, judge, what is thy sentence, life or death ?
Mercy or cruelty lies in thy breath.

JANE : Good sir, I do believe you love me well ;
For 'tis a silly conquest, silly pride
For one like you—I mean a gentleman—
To boast that by his love-tricks he hath brought
Such and such women to his amorous lure ;
I think you do not so, yet many do,
And make it even a very trade to woo.
I could be coy, as many women be,
Feed you with sunshine smiles and wanton looks,
But I detest witchcraft ; say that I
Do constantly believe you, constant have——
HAMMON : Why dost thou not believe me ?
JANE : I believe you ;
But yet, good sir, because I will not grieve you
With hopes to taste fruit which will never fall,
In simple truth this is the sum of all :
My husband lives, at least, I hope he lives.
Pressed was he to these bitter wars in France ;
Bitter they are to me by wanting him.
I have but one heart, and that heart's his due.
How can I then bestow the same on you ?
Whilst he lives, his I live, be it ne'er so poor,
And rather be his wife than a king's whore.

HAMMON : Chaste and dear woman, I will not abuse thee,
Although it cost my life, if thou refuse me.
Thy husband, pressed for France, what was his name ?
JANE : Ralph Damport.
HAMMON : Damport ?—Here's a letter sent
From France to me, from a dear friend of mine,
A gentleman of place ; here he doth write
Their names that have been slain in every fight.
JANE : I hope death's scroll contains not my love's name.
HAMMON : Cannot you read ?
JANE : I can.
HAMMON : Peruse the same.
To my remembrance such a name I read
Amongst the rest. See here.

ANE : Ay me, he's dead !
He's dead ! if this be true, my dear heart's slain !
AMMON : Have patience, dear love.
ANE : Hence, hence !
AMMON : Nay, sweet Jane,
Make not poor sorrow proud with these rich tears.
I mourn thy husband's death, because thou mourn'st.
ANE : That bill is forged ; 'tis signed by forgery.
AMMON : I'll bring thee letters sent besides to many,
Carrying the like report : Jane, 'tis too true.
Come, weep not : mourning, though it rise from love,
Helps not the mournèd, yet hurts them that mourn.
ANE : For God's sake, leave me.
AMMON : Whither dost thou turn ?
Forget the dead, love them that are alive ;
His love is faded, try how mine will thrive.
ANE : 'Tis now no time for me to think on love.
AMMON : 'Tis now best time for you to think on love.
Because your love lives not.
ANE : Though he be dead,
My love to him shall not be buried ;
For God's sake, leave me to myself alone.
AMMON : 'Twould kill my soul, to leave thee drowned in moan.
Answer me to my suit, and I am gone ;
Say to me yea or no.
ANE : No.
AMMON : Then farewell !
One farewell will not serve, I come again ;
Come, dry these wet cheeks ; tell me, faith, sweet Jane,
Yea or no, once more.
ANE : Once more I say, no ;
Once more be gone, I pray ; else will I go.
AMMON : Nay, then I will grow rude, by this white hand,
Until you change that cold 'no' ; here I'll stand
Till by your hard heart——
ANE : Nay, for God's love, peace !
My sorrows by your presence more increase.
Not that you thus are present, but all grief
Desires to be alone ; therefore in brief
Thus much I say, and saying bid adieu :
If ever I wed man, it shall be you.
AMMON : O blessed voice ! Dear Jane, I'll urge no more,
Thy breath hath made me rich.
ANE : Death makes me poor. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*London : a Street before* HODGE'S *Shop.*

HODGE, *at his shop-board,* RALPH, FIRK, HANS, *and a* BOY *at work.*

LL : Hey, down a down, derry.
ODGE : Well said, my hearts ; ply your work to-day, we loitered yesterday ;
to it pell-mell, that we may live to be lord mayors, or aldermen at least.
IRK : Hey, down a down, derry.
ODGE : Well said, i' faith ! How say'st thou, Hans, doth not Firk tickle it ?

HANS : Yaw, mester.

FIRK : Not so neither, my organ-pipe squeaks this morning for want of liquoring. Hey, down a down, derry !

HANS : Forward, Firk, tow best un jolly yongster. Hort, ay, mester, ic bid yo, cut me un pair vampres vor Mester Jeffre's boots.

HODGE : Thou shalt, Hans.

FIRK : Master !

HODGE : How now, boy ?

FIRK : Pray, now you are in the cutting vein, cut me out a pair of counterfeits, or else my work will not pass current ; hey, down a down !

HODGE : Tell me, sirs, are my cousin Mistress Priscilla's shoes done ?

FIRK : Your cousin ? No, master ; one of your aunts, hang her ; let them alone.

RALPH : I am in hand with them ; she gave charge that none but I should do them for her.

FIRK : Thou do for her ? then 'twill be a lame doing, and that she loves not. Ralph, thou might'st have sent her to me, in faith, I would have yearked and firked your Priscilla. Hey, down a down, derry. This gear will not hold.

HODGE : How say'st thou, Firk, were we not merry at Old Ford ?

FIRK : How, merry ? why, our buttocks went jiggy-joggy like a quagmire. Well, Sir Roger Oatmeal, if I thought all meal of that nature, I would eat nothing but bagpuddings.

RALPH : Of all good fortunes my fellow Hans had the best.

FIRK : 'Tis true, because Mistress Rose drank to him.

HODGE : Well, well, work apace. They say, seven of the aldermen be dead, or very sick.

FIRK : I care not, I'll be none.

RALPH : No, nor I ; but then my Master Eyre will come quickly to be lord mayor.

Enter SYBIL.

FIRK : Whoop, yonder comes Sybil.

HODGE : Sybil, welcome, i' faith ; and how dost thou, mad wench ?

FIRK : Syb-whore, welcome to London.

SYBIL : Godamercy, sweet Firk ; good lord, Hodge, what a delicious shop you have got ! You tickle it, i' faith.

RALPH : Godamercy, Sybil, for our good cheer at Old Ford.

SYBIL : That you shall have, Ralph.

FIRK : Nay, by the mass, we had tickling cheer, Sybil ; and how the plague dost thou and Mistress Rose and my lord mayor ? I put the women in first.

SYBIL : Well, Godamercy ; but God's me, I forget myself, where's Hans the Fleming ?

FIRK : Hark, butter-box, now you must yelp out some spreken.

HANS : Wat begaie you ? Vat vod you, Frister ?

SYBIL : Marry, you must come to my young mistress, to pull on her shoes you made last.

HANS : Vare ben your egle fro, vare ben your mistris ?

SYBIL : Marry, here at our London house in Cornhill.

FIRK : Will nobody serve her turn but Hans ?

SYBIL : No, sir. Come, Hans, I stand upon needles.

HODGE : Why then, Sybil, take heed of pricking.

SYBIL : For that let me alone. I have a trick in my budget. Come, Hans.

HANS : Yaw, yaw, ic sall meete yo gane. [*Exit* HANS *and* SYBIL.

HODGE : Go, Hans, make haste again. Come, who lacks work ?
IRK : I, master, for I lack my breakfast ; 'tis munching-time and past.
HODGE : Is't so ? why, then leave work, Ralph. To breakfast ! Boy, look to the tools. Come, Ralph ; come, Firk. [*Exeunt.*

Enter a SERVING-MAN.

ERVING-MAN : Let me see now, the sign of the
Last in Tower Street. Mass, yonder's the house.
What, haw ! who's within ?

Enter RALPH.

RALPH : Who calls there ? What want you, sir ?
ERVING-MAN : Marry, I would have a pair of shoes made for a gentlewoman against to-morrow morning. What, can you do them ?
RALPH : Yes, sir, you shall have them. But what length's her foot ?
ERVING-MAN : Why, you must make them in all parts like this shoe ; but, at any hand, fail not to do them, for the gentlewoman is to be married very early in the morning.
RALPH : How ? by this shoe must it be made ? by this ? Are you sure, sir, by this ?
ERVING-MAN : How, by this ? Am I sure, by this ? Art thou in thy wits ? I tell thee, I must have a pair of shoes, dost thou mark me ? a pair of shoes, two shoes, made by this very shoe, this same shoe, against to-morrow morning by four a clock. Dost understand me ? Canst thou do't. ?
RALPH : Yes, sir, yes—ay, ay !—I can do't. By this shoe, you say ? I should know this shoe. Yes, sir, yes, by this shoe, I can do't. Four a clock, well. Whither shall I bring them ?
ERVING-MAN : To the sign of the Golden Ball in Watling Street ; enquire for one Master Hammon, a gentleman, my master.
RALPH : Yea, sir ; by this shoe, you say ?
ERVING-MAN : I say, Master Hammon at the Golden Ball ; he's the bride-groom, and those shoes are for his bride.
RALPH : They shall be done by this shoe ; well, well, Master Hammon at the Golden Shoe—I would say, the Golden Ball ; very well, very well. But I pray you, sir, where must Master Hammon be married ?
ERVING-MAN : At Saint Faith's Church, under Paul's. But what's that to thee ? Prithee, dispatch those shoes, and so farewell. [*Exit.*
RALPH : By this shoe, said he. How am I amazed
At this strange accident ! Upon my life,
This was the very shoe I gave my wife,
When I was pressed for France ; since when, alas !
I never could hear of her : 'tis the same,
And Hammon's bride no other but my Jane.

Enter FIRK.

IRK : 'Snails, Ralph, thou hast lost thy part of three pots, a countryman of mine gave me to breakfast.
RALPH : I care not ; I have found a better thing.
IRK : A thing ? away ! Is it a man's thing, or a woman's thing ?
RALPH : Firk, dost thou know this shoe ?
IRK : No, by my troth ; neither doth that know me ! I have no acquaintance with it, 'tis a mere stranger to me.

RALPH : Why, then I do ; this shoe, I durst be sworn,
Once covered the instep of my Jane.
This is her size, her breadth, thus trod my love ;
These true-love knots I pricked ; I hold my life,
By this old shoe I shall find out my wife.

FIRK : Ha, ha ! Old shoe, that wert new ! How a murrain came this ague-fit of foolishness upon thee ?

RALPH : Thus, Firk : even now here came a serving-man ;
By this shoe would he have a new pair made
Against to-morrow morning for his mistress,
That's to be married to a gentleman.
And why may not this be my sweet Jane ?

FIRK : And why may'st not thou be my sweet ass ? Ha, ha !

RALPH : Well, laugh and spare not ! But the truth is this :
Against to-morrow morning I'll provide
A lusty crew of honest shoemakers,
To watch the going of the bride to church.
If she prove Jane, I'll take her in despite
From Hammon and the devil, were he by.
If it be not my Jane, what remedy ?
Hereof I am sure, I shall live till I die,
Although I never with a woman lie. [*Exit.*

FIRK : Thou lie with a woman, to build nothing but Cripple-gates ! Well, God sends fools fortune, and it may be, he may light upon his matrimony by such a device ; for wedding and hanging goes by destiny. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*London : a Room in the* LORD MAYOR'S *House in Cornhill.*

Enter HANS *and* ROSE, *arm in arm.*

HANS : How happy am I by embracing thee !
Oh, I did fear such cross mishaps did reign,
That I should never see my Rose again.

ROSE : Sweet Lacy, since fair opportunity
Offers herself to further our escape,
Let not too over-fond esteem of me
Hinder that happy hour. Invent the means,
And Rose will follow thee through all the world.

HANS : Oh, how I surfeit with excess of joy,
Made happy by thy rich perfection !
But since thou pay'st sweet interest to my hopes,
Redoubling love on love, let me once more
Like to a bold-faced debtor crave of thee,
This night to steal abroad, and at Eyre's house,
Who now by death of certain aldermen
Is mayor of London, and my master once,
Meet thou thy Lacy, where in spite of change,
Your father's anger, and mine uncle's hate,
Our happy nuptials will we consummate.

Enter SYBIL.

SYBIL : Oh God, what will you do, mistress ? Shift for yourself, your father is at hand ! He's coming, he's coming ! Master Lacy, hide yourself in my mistress ! For God's sake, shift for yourselves !

HANS : Your father come, sweet Rose—what shall I do ?
Where shall I hide me ? How shall I escape ?
ROSE : A man, and want wit in extremity ?
Come, come, be Hans still, play the shoemaker,
Pull on my shoe.

Enter the LORD MAYOR.

HANS : Mass, and that's well remembered.
SYBIL : Here comes your father.
HANS : Foreware, metresse, 'tis un good skow, it sal vel dute, or ye sal neit betallen.
ROSE : Oh God, it pincheth me ; what will you do ?
HANS (*aside*) : Your father's presence pincheth, not the shoe.
LORD MAYOR : Well done ; fit my daughter well, and she shall please thee well.
HANS : Yaw, yaw, ick, weit dat well ; forware, 'tis un good skoo, 'tis gimait van neits leither ; se euer, mine here.

Enter a PRENTICE.

LORD MAYOR : I do believe it.—What's the news with you ?
PRENTICE : Please you, the Earl of Lincoln at the gate
Is newly 'lighted, and would speak with you.
LORD MAYOR : The Earl of Lincoln come to speak with me ?
Well, well, I know his errand. Daughter Rose,
Send hence your shoemaker, dispatch, have done !
Syb, make things handsome ! Sir boy, follow me. [*Exit.*
HANS : Mine uncle come ! Oh, what may this portend ?
Sweet Rose, this of our love threatens an end.
ROSE : Be not dismayed at this ; whate'er befall,
Rose is thine own. To witness I speak truth,
Where thou appoint'st the place, I'll meet with thee.
I will not fix a day to follow thee,
But presently steal hence. Do not reply :
Love which gave strength to bear my father's hate,
Shall now add wings to further our escape. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Another Room in the same House.*

Enter the LORD MAYOR *and the* EARL OF LINCOLN.

LORD MAYOR : Believe me, on my credit, I speak truth :
Since first your nephew Lacy went to France,
I have not seen him. It seemed strange to me,
When Dodger told me that he stayed behind,
Neglecting the high charge the king imposed.
LINCOLN : Trust me, Sir Roger Oteley, I did think
Your counsel had given head to this attempt,
Drawn to it by the love he bears your child.
Here I did hope to find him in your house ;
But now I see mine error, and confess,
My judgment wronged you by conceiving so.
LORD MAYOR : Lodge in my house, say you ? Trust me, my lord,
I love your nephew Lacy too too dearly,
So much to wrong his honour ; and he hath done so,

That first gave him advice to stay from France.
To witness I speak truth, I let you know,
How careful I have been to keep my daughter
Free from all conference or speech of him ;
Not that I scorn your nephew, but in love
I bear your honour, lest your noble blood
Should by my mean worth be dishonoured.

LINCOLN (*aside*) : How far the churl's tongue wanders from his heart !
—Well, well, Sir Roger Oteley, I believe you,
With more than many thanks for the kind love
So much you seem to bear me. But, my lord,
Let me request your help to seek my nephew,
Whom if I find, I'll straight embark for France.
So shall your Rose be free, my thoughts at rest,
And much care die which now lies in my breast.

Enter SYBIL.

SYBIL : Oh Lord ! Help, for God's sake ! my mistress ; oh, my young mistress !

LORD MAYOR : Where is thy mistress ? What's become of her ?

SYBIL : She's gone, she's fled !

LORD MAYOR : Gone ! Whither is she fled ?

SYBIL : I know not, forsooth ; she's fled out of doors with Hans the shoemaker ; I saw them scud, scud, scud, apace, apace !

LORD MAYOR : Which way ? What, John ! Where be my men ? Which way ?

SYBIL : I know not, an it please your worship.

LORD MAYOR : Fled with a shoemaker ? Can this be true ?

SYBIL : Oh Lord, sir, as true as God's in Heaven.

LINCOLN (*aside*) : Her love turned shoemaker ? I am glad of this.

LORD MAYOR : A Fleming butter-box, a shoemaker !
Will she forget her birth, requite my care
With such ingratitude ? Scorned she young Hammon
To love a honnikin, a needy knave ?
Well, let her fly, I'll not fly after her,
Let her starve, if she will ; she's none of mine.

LINCOLN : Be not so cruel, sir.

Enter FIRK *with shoes.*

SYBIL (*aside*) : I am glad, she's 'scaped.

LORD MAYOR : I'll not account of her as of my child.
Was there no better object for her eyes
But a foul drunken lubber, swill-belly,
A shoemaker ? That's brave !

FIRK : Yea, forsooth ; 'tis a very brave shoe, and as fit as a pudding.

LORD MAYOR : How now, what knave is this ? From whence comest thou ?

FIRK : No knave, sir. I am Firk the shoemaker, lusty Roger's chief lusty journeyman, and I come hither to take up the pretty leg of sweet Mistress Rose, and thus hoping your worship is in as good health, as I was at the making hereof, I bid you farewell, yours, Firk.

LORD MAYOR : Stay, stay, Sir Knave !

LINCOLN : Come hither, shoemaker !

FIRK : 'Tis happy the knave is put before the shoemaker, or else I would not have vouchsafed to come back to you. I am moved, for I stir.

LORD MAYOR : My lord, this villain calls us knaves by craft.

FIRK : Then 'tis by the Gentle Craft, and to call one knave gently, is no harm. Sit your worship merry ! [*Aside to* SYBIL.] Syb, your young mistress—I'll so bob them, now my Master Eyre is lord mayor of London.

LORD MAYOR : Tell me, sirrah, whose man are you ?

FIRK : I am glad to see your worship so merry. I have no maw to this gear, no stomach as yet to a red petticoat. [*Pointing to* SYBIL.

LINCOLN : He means not, sir, to woo you to his maid,
But only doth demand whose man you are.

FIRK : I sing now to the tune of Rogero. Roger, my fellow, is now my master.

LINCOLN : Sirrah, know'st thou one Hans, a shoemaker ?

FIRK : Hans, shoemaker ? Oh yes, stay, yes, I have him. I tell you what, I speak it in secret : Mistress Rose and he are by this time—no, not so, but shortly are to come over one another with ' Can you dance the shaking of the sheets ? ' It is that Hans—(*aside.*) I'll so gull these diggers !

LORD MAYOR : Know'st thou, then, where he is ?

FIRK : Yes, forsooth ; yea, marry !

LINCOLN : Canst thou, in sadness ?

FIRK : No, forsooth ; no, marry !

LORD MAYOR : Tell me, good honest fellow, where he is,
And thou shalt see what I'll bestow of thee.

FIRK : Honest fellow ? No, sir ; not so, sir ; my profession is the Gentle Craft ; I care not for seeing, I love feeling ; let me feel it here ; *aurium tenus*, ten pieces of gold ; *genuum tenus*, ten pieces of silver ; and then Firk is your man —(*aside*) in a new pair of stretchers.

LORD MAYOR : Here is an angel, part of thy reward,
Which I will give thee ; tell me where he is.

FIRK : No point ! Shall I betray my brother ? no ! Shall I prove Judas to Hans ? no ! Shall I cry treason to my corporation ? no, I shall be firked and yerked then. But give me your angel ; your angel shall tell you.

LINCOLN : Do so, good fellow ; 'tis no hurt to thee.

FIRK : Send simpering Syb away.

LORD MAYOR : Huswife, get you in. [*Exit* SYBIL.

FIRK : Pitchers have ears, and maids have wide mouths ; but for Haunsprauns, upon my word, to-morrow morning he and young Mistress Rose go to this gear, they shall be married together, by this rush, or else turn Firk to a firkin of butter, to tan leather withal.

LORD MAYOR : But art thou sure of this ?

FIRK : Am I sure that Paul's steeple is a handful higher than London Stone, or that the Pissing-Conduit leaks nothing but pure Mother Bunch ? Am I sure I am lusty Firk ? God's nails, do you think I am so base to gull you ?

LINCOLN : Where are they married ? Dost thou know the church ?

FIRK : I never go to church, but I know the name of it ; it is a swearing church —stay a while, 'tis—Ay, by the mass, no, no,—'tis—Ay, by my troth, no, nor that ; 'tis—Ay, by my faith, that, that, 'tis, Ay, by my Faith's Church under Paul's Cross. There they shall be knit like a pair of stockings in matrimony ; there they'll be inconie.

LINCOLN : Upon my life, my nephew Lacy walks
In the disguise of this Dutch shoemaker.

FIRK : Yes, forsooth.

LINCOLN : Doth he not, honest fellow ?

FIRK : No, forsooth ; I think Hans is nobody but Hans, no spirit.

LORD MAYOR : My mind misgives me now, 'tis so, indeed.

LINCOLN : My cousin speaks the language, knows the trade.

LORD MAYOR : Let me request your company, my lord ;
Your honourable presence may, no doubt,
Refrain their headstrong rashness, when myself
Going alone perchance may be o'erborne.
Shall I request this favour ?

LINCOLN : This, or what else.

FIRK : Then you must rise betimes, for they mean to fall to their "hey-pass and repass," "pindy-pandy, which hand will you have," very early.

LORD MAYOR : My care shall every way equal their haste.
This night accept your lodging in my house,
The earlier shall we stir, and at Saint Faith's
Prevent this giddy hare-brained nuptial.
This traffic of hot love shall yield cold gains :
They ban our loves, and we'll forbid their banns. [*Exit.*

LINCOLN : At Saint Faith's Church thou say'st ?

FIRK : Yes, by my troth.

LINCOLN : Be secret, on thy life. [*Exit.*

FIRK : Yes, when I kiss your wife ! Ha, ha, here's no craft in the Gentle Craft. I came hither of purpose with shoes to Sir Roger's worship, whilst Rose, his daughter, be cony-catched by Hans. Soft now ; these two gulls will be at Saint Faith's Church to-morrow morning, to take Master Bridegroom and Mistress Bride napping, and they, in the meantime, shall chop up the matter at the Savoy. But the best sport is, Sir Roger Oteley will find my fellow lame Ralph's wife going to marry a gentleman, and then he'll stop her instead of his daughter. Oh, brave ! there will be fine tickling sport. Soft now, what have I to do ? Oh, I know ; now a mess of shoemakers meet at the Woolsack in Ivy Lane, to cozen my gentleman of lame Ralph's wife, that's true.

Alack, alack !
Girls, hold out tack !
For now smocks for this jumbling
Shall go to wrack. [*Exit.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—*A Room in* EYRE'S *House.*

Enter EYRE, MARGERY, HANS, *and* ROSE.

EYRE : This is the morning, then, say, my bully, my honest Hans, is it not ?

HANS : This is the morning that must make us two happy or miserable ; therefore, if you——

EYRE : Away with these ifs and ans, Hans, and these et caeteras ! By mine honour, Rowland Lacy, none but the king shall wrong thee. Come, fear nothing, am not I Sim Eyre ? Is not Sim Eyre lord mayor of London ? Fear nothing, Rose : let them all say what they can ; dainty, come thou to me—laughest thou ?

MARGERY : Good my lord, stand her friend in what thing you may.

EYRE : Why, my sweet Lady Madgy, think you Simon Eyre can forget his fine Dutch journeyman ? No vah ! Fie, I scorn it, it shall never be cast in my teeth, that I was unthankful. Lady Madgy, thou had'st never covered thy Saracen's head with this French flap, nor loaden thy bum with this farthingale ('tis trash, trumpery, vanity) ; Simon Eyre had never walked in a red petticoat, nor wore a chain of gold, but for my fine journeyman's Portigues.—And shall I leave him ? No ! Prince am I none, yet bear a princely mind.

HANS : My lord, 'tis time for us to part from hence.

EYRE : Lady Madgy, Lady Madgy, take two or three of my pie-crust-eaters, my buff-jerkin varlets, that do walk in black gowns at Simon Eyre's heels ; take them, good Lady Madgy ; trip and go, my brown queen of periwigs, with my delicate Rose and my jolly Rowland to the Savoy ; see them linked, countenance the marriage ; and when it is done, cling, cling together, you Hamborow turtle-doves. I'll bear you out, come to Simon Eyre ; come, dwell with me, Hans, thou shalt eat minced-pies and marchpane. Rose, away, cricket ; trip and go, my Lady Madgy, to the Savoy ; Hans, wed, and to bed ; kiss, and away ! Go, vanish !

MARGERY : Farewell, my lord.

ROSE : Make haste, sweet love.

MARGERY : She'd fain the deed were done.

HANS : Come, my sweet Rose ; faster than deer we'll run. [*Exeunt all but* EYRE.

EYRE : Go, vanish, vanish ! Avaunt, I say ! By the Lord of Ludgate, it's a mad life to be a lord mayor ; it's a stirring life, a fine life, a velvet life, a careful life. Well, Simon Eyre, yet set a good face on it, in the honour of Saint Hugh. Soft, the king this day comes to dine with me, to see my new buildings ; his majesty is welcome, he shall have good cheer, delicate cheer, princely cheer. This day, my fellow prentices of London come to dine with me too ; they shall have fine cheer, gentlemanlike cheer. I promised the mad Cappadocians, when we all served at the Conduit together, that if ever I came to be mayor of London, I would feast them all, and I'll do 't, I'll do 't, by the life of Pharaoh ; by this beard, Sim Eyre will be no flincher. Besides, I have procured that upon every Shrove Tuesday, at the sound of the pancake bell, my fine dapper Assyrian lads shall clap up their shop windows, and away. This is the day, and this day they shall do 't, they shall do 't.

Boys, that day are you free, let masters care,
And prentices shall pray for Simon Eyre. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Street near St. Faith's Church.*

Enter HODGE, FIRK, RALPH, *and five or six* SHOEMAKERS, *all with cudgels or such weapons.*

HODGE : Come, Ralph ; stand to it, Firk. My masters, as we are the brave bloods of the shoemakers, heirs apparent to Saint Hugh, and perpetual benefactors to all good fellows, thou shalt have no wrong ; were Hammon a king of spades, he should not delve in thy close without thy sufferance. But tell me, Ralph, art thou sure 'tis thy wife ?

RALPH : Am I sure this is Firk ? This morning, when I stroked on her shoes, I looked upon her, and she upon me, and sighed, asked me if ever I knew one Ralph. Yes, said I. For his sake, said she—tears standing in her eyes —and for thou art somewhat like him, spend this piece of gold. I took it ; my lame leg and my travel beyond sea made me unknown. All is one for that : I know she's mine.

FIRK : Did she give thee this gold ? O glorious glittering gold ! She's thine own, 'tis thy wife, and she loves thee ; for I'll stand to 't, there's no woman will give gold to any man, but she thinks better of him, than she thinks of them she gives silver to. And for Hammon, neither Hammon nor hangman shall wrong thee in London. Is not our old master Eyre, lord mayor ? Speak, my hearts.

ALL : Yes, and Hammon shall know it to his cost.

Enter HAMMON, *his* SERVING-MAN, JANE, *and others.*

HODGE : Peace, my bullies ; yonder they come.
RALPH : Stand to't, my hearts. Firk, let me speak first.
HODGE : No, Ralph, let me.—Hammon, whither away so early ?
HAMMON : Unmannerly, rude slave, what's that to thee ?
FIRK : To him, sir ! Yes, sir, and to me, and others. Good-morrow, Jane, how dost thou? Good Lord, how the world is changed with you ! God be thanked !
HAMMON : Villains, hands off ! How dare you touch my love ?
ALL THE SHOEMAKERS : Villains ? Down with them ! Cry clubs for prentices !
HODGE : Hold, my hearts ! Touch her, Hammon ? Yea, and more than that : we'll carry her away with us. My masters and gentlemen, never draw your bird-spits ; shoemakers are steel to the back, men every inch of them, all spirit.
THOSE OF HAMMON'S SIDE : Well, and what of all this ?
HODGE : I'll show you.—Jane, dost thou know this man ? 'Tis Ralph, I can tell thee : nay, 'tis he in faith, though he be lamed by the wars. Yet look not strange, but run to him, fold him about the neck and kiss him.
JANE : Lives then my husband ? Oh God, let me go,
Let me embrace my Ralph.
HAMMON : What means my Jane ?
JANE : Nay, what meant you, to tell me he was slain ?
HAMMON : [O] pardon me, dear love, for being misled.
(*To* RALPH.) 'Twas rumoured here in London, thou wert dead.
FIRK : Thou seest he lives. Lass, go, pack home with him. Now, Master Hammon, where's your mistress, your wife ?
SERVING-MAN : 'Swounds, master, fight for her ! Will you thus lose her ?
SHOEMAKERS : Down with that creature ! Clubs ! Down with him !
HODGE : Hold, hold !
HAMMON : Hold, fool ! Sirs, he shall do no wrong. Will my Jane leave me thus, and break her faith ?
FIRK : Yea, sir ! She must, sir ! She shall, sir ! What then ? Mend it !
HODGE : Hark, fellow Ralph, follow my counsel : set the wench in the midst, and let her choose her man, and let her be his woman.
JANE : Whom should I choose ? Whom should my thoughts affect
But him whom Heaven hath made to be my love ?
Thou art my husband, and these humble weeds
Make thee more beautiful than all his wealth.
Therefore, I will but put off his attire,
Returning it into the owner's hand,
And after ever be thy constant wife.
HODGE : Not a rag, Jane ! The law's on our side ; he that sows in another man's ground, forfeits his harvest. Get thee home, Ralph ; follow him, Jane ; he shall not have so much as a busk-point from thee.
FIRK : Stand to that, Ralph ; the appurtenances are thine own. Hammon, look not at her !
SERVING-MAN : O, 'swounds, no !
FIRK : Blue coat, be quiet, we'll give you a new livery else ; we'll make Shrove Tuesday Saint George's Day for you. Look not, Hammon, leer not ! I'll firk you ! For thy head now, [not] one glance, one sheep's eye, anything, at her ! Touch not a rag, lest I and my brethren beat you to clouts.
SERVING-MAN : Come, Master Hammon, there's no striving here.
HAMMON : Good fellows, hear me speak ; and, honest Ralph,
Whom I have injured most by loving Jane,

Mark what I offer thee : here in fair gold
Is twenty pound, I'll give it for thy Jane :
If this content thee not, thou shalt have more.

HODGE : Sell not thy wife, Ralph ; make her not a whore.

HAMMON : Say, wilt thou freely cease thy claim in her,
And let her be my wife ?

ALL THE SHOEMAKERS : No, do not, Ralph.

RALPH : Sirrah Hammon, Hammon, dost thou think a shoemaker is so base to be a bawd to his own wife for commodity ? Take thy gold, choke with it ! Were I not lame, I would make thee eat thy words.

FIRK : A shoemaker sell his flesh and blood ? Oh, indignity !

HODGE : Sirrah, take up your pelf, and be packing.

HAMMON : I will not touch one penny, but in lieu
Of that great wrong I offerèd thy Jane,
To Jane and thee I give that twenty pound.
Since I have failed of her, during my life,
I vow, no woman else shall be my wife.
Farewell, good fellows of the Gentle Trade :
Your morning mirth my mourning day hath made. [*Exit.*

FIRK (*to the* SERVING-MAN) : Touch the gold, creature, if you dare ! Y'are best be trudging. Here, Jane, take thou it. Now let's home, my hearts.

HODGE : Stay ! Who comes here ? Jane, on again with thy mask !

Enter the EARL OF LINCOLN, *the* LORD MAYOR, *and* SERVANTS.

LINCOLN : Yonder's the lying varlet mocked us so.

LORD MAYOR : Come hither, sirrah !

FIRK : I, sir ? I am sirrah ? You mean me, do you not ?

LINCOLN : Where is my nephew married ?

FIRK : Is he married ? God give him joy, I am glad of it. They have a fair day, and the sign is in a good planet, Mars in Venus.

LORD MAYOR : Villain, thou toldst me that my daughter Rose
This morning should be married at Saint Faith's ;
We have watched there these three hours at the least,
Yet see we no such thing.

FIRK : Truly, I am sorry for 't ; a bride's a pretty thing.

HODGE : Come to the purpose. Yonder's the bride and bridegroom you look for, I hope. Though you be lords, you are not to bar by your authority men from women, are you ?

LORD MAYOR : See, see, my daughter's masked.

LINCOLN : True, and my nephew,
To hide his guilt, [now] counterfeits him lame.

FIRK : Yea, truly ; God help the poor couple, they are lame and blind.

LORD MAYOR : I'll ease her blindness.

LINCOLN : I'll his lameness cure.

FIRK (*aside to the* SHOEMAKERS) : Lie down, sirs, and laugh ! My fellow Ralph is taken for Rowland Lacy, and Jane for Mistress Damask Rose. This is all my knavery.

LORD MAYOR : What, have I found you, minion ?

LINCOLN : O base wretch !
Nay, hide thy face, the horror of thy guilt
Can hardly be washed off. Where are thy powers ?
What battles have you made ? O yes, I see,
Thou fought'st with Shame, and Shame hath conquered thee.
This lameness will not serve.

LORD MAYOR : Unmask yourself.
LINCOLN : Lead home your daughter.
LORD MAYOR : Take your nephew hence.
RALPH : Hence ! 'Swounds, what mean you ? Are you mad ? I hope you cannot enforce my wife from me. Where's Hammon ?
LORD MAYOR : Your wife ?
LINCOLN : What Hammon ?
RALPH : Yea, my wife ; and, therefore, the proudest of you that lays hands on her first, I'll lay my crutch 'cross his pate.
FIRK : To him, lame Ralph ! Here's brave sport !
RALPH : Rose call you her ? Why, her name is Jane. Look here else ; do you know her now ? [*Unmasking* JANE.
LINCOLN : Is this your daughter ?
LORD MAYOR : No, nor this your nephew.
My Lord of Lincoln, we are both abused
By this base, crafty varlet.
FIRK : Yea, forsooth, no varlet ; forsooth, no base ; forsooth, I am but mean ; no crafty neither, but of the Gentle Craft.
LORD MAYOR : Where is my daughter Rose ? Where is my child ?
LINCOLN : Where is my nephew Lacy married ?
FIRK : Why, here is good laced mutton, as I promised you.
LINCOLN : Villain, I'll have thee punished for this wrong.
FIRK : Punish the journeyman villain, but not the journeyman shoemaker.

Enter DODGER.

DODGER : My lord, I come to bring unwelcome news.
Your nephew Lacy and your daughter Rose
Early this morning wedded at the Savoy,
None being present but the lady mayoress.
Besides, I learnt among the officers,
The lord mayor vows to stand in their defence
'Gainst any that shall seek to cross the match.
LINCOLN : Dares Eyre the shoemaker uphold the deed ?
FIRK : Yes, sir, shoemakers dare stand in a woman's quarrel, I warrant you, as deep as another, and deeper too.
DODGER : Besides, his grace to-day dines with the mayor ;
Who on his knees humbly intends to fall
And beg a pardon for your nephew's fault.
LINCOLN : But I'll prevent him ! Come, Sir Roger Oteley ;
The king will do us justice in this cause.
Howe'er their hands have made them man and wife,
I will disjoin the match, or lose my life. [*Exeunt.*
FIRK : Adieu, Monsieur Dodger ! Farewell, fools ! Ha, ha ! Oh, if they had stayed, I would have so lambed them with flouts ! O heart, my codpiece-point is ready to fly in pieces every time I think upon Mistress Rose ; but let that pass, as my lady mayoress says.
HODGE : This matter is answered. Come, Ralph ; home with thy wife. Come, my fine shoemakers, let's to our master's, the new lord mayor, and there swagger this Shrove Tuesday. I'll promise you wine enough, for Madge keeps the cellar.
ALL : O rare ! Madge is a good wench.
FIRK : And I'll promise you meat enough, for simp'ring Susan keeps the larder.

I'll lead you to victuals, my brave soldiers ; follow your captain. O brave ! Hark, hark ! [*Bell rings.*

ALL : The pancake-bell rings, the pancake-bell ! Trilill, my hearts !

FIRK : O brave ! O sweet bell ! O delicate pancakes ! Open the doors, my hearts, and shut up the windows ! keep in the house, let out the pancakes ! Oh, rare, my hearts ! Let's march together for the honour of Saint Hugh to the great new hall in Gracious Street-corner, which our master, the new lord mayor, hath built.

RALPH : O the crew of good fellows that will dine at my lord mayor's cost to-day !

HODGE : By the Lord, my lord mayor is a most brave man. How shall prentices be bound to pray for him and the honour of the gentlemen shoemakers ! Let's feed and be fat with my lord's bounty.

FIRK : O musical bell, still ! O Hodge, O my brethren ! There's cheer for the heavens : venison-pasties walk up and down piping hot, like sergeants ; beef and brewis comes marching in dry-fats, fritters and pancakes come trowling in in wheel-barrows ; hens and oranges hopping in porters'-baskets, collops and eggs in scuttles, and tarts and custards come quavering in in malt-shovels.

Enter more PRENTICES.

ALL : Whoop, look here, look here !

HODGE : How now, mad lads, whither away so fast ?

FIRST PRENTICE : Whither ? Why, to the great new hall, know you not why ? The lord mayor hath bidden all the prentices in London to breakfast this morning.

ALL : Oh, brave shoemaker, oh, brave lord of incomprehensible good fellowship ! Whoo ! Hark you ! The pancake-bell rings. [*Cast up caps.*

FIRK : Nay, more, my hearts ! Every Shrove Tuesday is our year of jubilee ; and when the pancake-bell rings, we are as free as my lord mayor ; we may shut up our shops, and make holiday. I'll have it called Saint Hugh's Holiday.

ALL : Agreed, agreed ! Saint Hugh's Holiday.

HODGE : And this shall continue for ever.

ALL : Oh, brave ! Come, come, my hearts ! Away, away !

FIRK : O eternal credit to us of the Gentle Craft ! March fair, my hearts ! Oh, rare ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Street in London.*

Enter the KING *and his Train over the stage.*

KING : Is our lord mayor of London such a gallant ?

NOBLEMAN : One of the merriest madcaps in your land.
Your grace will think, when you behold the man,
He's rather a wild ruffian than a mayor.
Yet thus much I'll ensure your majesty.
In all his actions that concern his state,
He is as serious, provident, and wise,
As full of gravity amongst the grave,
As any mayor hath been these many years.

KING : I am with child, till I behold this huff-cap.
But all my doubt is, when we come in presence,
His madness will be dashed clean out of countenance.

NOBLEMAN : It may be so, my liege.

KING : Which to prevent
Let some one give him notice, 'tis our pleasure
That he put on his wonted merriment.
Set forward !
ALL : On afore ! [*Exeun*

SCENE IV.—*A Great Hall.*

Enter EYRE, HODGE, FIRK, RALPH, *and other* SHOEMAKERS, *all with napkins o their shoulders.*

EYRE : Come, my fine Hodge, my jolly gentlemen shoemakers ; soft, where b these cannibals, these varlets, my officers ? Let them all walk and wait upo my brethren ; for my meaning is, that none but shoemakers, none but th livery of my company shall in their satin hoods wait upon the trencher of m sovereign.

FIRK : O my lord, it will be rare !

EYRE : No more, Firk ; come, lively ! Let your fellow prentices want no cheer let wine be plentiful as beer, and beer as water. Hang these penny-pinchin fathers, that cram wealth in innocent lambskins. Rip, knaves, avaunt ! Loo to my guests !

HODGE : My lord, we are at our wits' end for room ; those hundred tables will nc feast the fourth part of them.

EYRE : Then cover me those hundred tables again, and again, till all my joll prentices be feasted. Avoid, Hodge ! Run, Ralph ! Frisk about, my nimbl Firk ! Carouse me fathom-healths to the honour of the shoemakers. Do the drink lively, Hodge ? Do they tickle it, Firk ?

FIRK : Tickle it ? Some of them have taken their liquor standing so long tha they can stand no longer ; but for meat, they would eat it, an they had it.

EYRE : Want they meat ? Where's this swag-belly, this greasy kitchenstuff cook Call the varlet to me ! Want meat ? Firk, Hodge, lame Ralph, run, my ta men, beleaguer the shambles, beggar all Eastcheap, serve me whole oxe in chargers, and let sheep whine upon the tables like pigs for want of goo fellows to eat them. Want meat ? Vanish, Firk ! Avaunt, Hodge !

HODGE : Your lordship mistakes my man Firk ; he means, their bellies wa meat, not the boards ; for they have drunk so much, they can eat nothing.

Enter HANS, ROSE, *and* MARGERY.

MARGERY : Where is my lord ?

EYRE : How now, Lady Madgy ?

MARGERY : The king's most excellent majesty is new come ; he sends me for th honour ; one of his most worshipful peers bade me tell thou must be merr and so forth ; but let that pass.

EYRE : Is my sovereign come ? Vanish, my tall shoemakers, my nimb brethren ; look to my guests, the prentices. Yet stay a little ! How no Hans ? How looks my little Rose ?

HANS : Let me request you to remember me.
I know, your honour easily may obtain
Free pardon of the king for me and Rose,
And reconcile me to my uncle's grace.

EYRE : Have done, my good Hans, my honest journeyman ; look cheerily ! I fall upon both my knees, till they be as hard as horn, but I'll get thy pardo

MARGERY : Good my lord, have a care what you speak to his grace.

EYRE : Away, you Islington whitepot ! hence you hopperarse ! you barley-pudding, full of maggots ! you broiled carbonado ! avaunt, avaunt, avoid, Mephistophilus ! Shall Sim Eyre learn to speak of you, Lady Madgy ? Vanish Mother Miniver-cap ; vanish, go, trip and go ; meddle with your partlets and your pishery-pashery, your flewes and your whirligigs ; go, rub, out of mine alley ! Sim Eyre knows how to speak to a Pope, to Sultan Soliman, to Tamburlaine, an he were here, and shall I melt, shall I droop before my sovereign ? No, come, my Lady Madgy ! Follow me, Hans ! About your business, my frolic free-booters ! Firk, frisk about, and about, and about, for the honour of mad Simon Eyre, lord mayor of London.

FIRK : Hey, for the honour of the shoemakers. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*An Open Yard before the Hall.*

A long flourish, or two. Enter the KING, NOBLES, EYRE, MARGERY, LACY, ROSE. LACY *and* ROSE *kneel.*

KING : Well, Lacy, though the fact was very foul
Of your revolting from our kingly love
And your own duty, yet we pardon you.
Rise both, and, Mistress Lacy, thank my lord mayor
For your young bridegroom here.

EYRE : So, my dear liege, Sim Eyre and my brethren, the gentlemen shoemakers, shall set your sweet majesty's image cheek by jowl by Saint Hugh for this honour you have done poor Simon Eyre. I beseech your grace, pardon my rude behaviour ; I am a handicraftsman, yet my heart is without craft ; I would be sorry at my soul, that my boldness should offend my king.

KING : Nay, I pray thee, good lord mayor, be even as merry
As if thou wert among thy shoemakers ;
It does me good to see thee in this humour.

EYRE : Say'st thou me so, my sweet Dioclesian ? Then, humph ! Prince am I none, yet am I princely born. By the Lord of Ludgate, my leige, I'll be as merry as a pie.

KING : Tell me, in faith, mad Eyre, how old thou art.

EYRE : My liege, a very boy, a stripling, a younker ; you see not a white hair on my head, not a grey in this beard. Every hair, I assure thy majesty, that sticks in this beard, Sim Eyre values at the King of Babylon's ransom, Tamar Cham's beard was a rubbing brush to 't : yet I'll shave it off, and stuff tennis-balls with it, to please my bully king.

KING : But all this while I do not know your age.

EYRE : My liege, I am six and fifty year old, yet I can cry humph ! with a sound heart for the honour of Saint Hugh. Mark this old wench, my king : I danced the shaking of the sheets with her six and thirty years ago, and yet I hope to get two or three young lord mayors, ere I die. I am lusty still, Sim Eyre still. Care and cold lodging brings white hairs. My sweet Majesty, let care vanish, cast it upon thy nobles, it will make thee look always young like Apollo, and cry humph ! Prince am I none, yet am I princely born.

KING : Ha, ha !
Say, Cornwall, didst thou ever see his like ?

CORNWALL : Not I, my lord.

Enter the EARL OF LINCOLN *and the* LORD MAYOR.

KING : Lincoln, what news with you ?

LINCOLN : My gracious lord, have care unto yourself,
For there are traitors here.
ALL : Traitors ? Where ? Who ?
EYRE : Traitors in my house ? God forbid ! Where be my officers ? I'll spend m
soul, ere my king feel harm.
KING : Where is the traitor, Lincoln ?
LINCOLN : Here he stands.
KING : Cornwall, lay hold on Lacy !—Lincoln, speak,
What canst thou lay unto thy nephew's charge ?
LINCOLN : This, my dear liege : your grace, to do me honour,
Heaped on the head of this degenerous boy
Desertless favours ; you made choice of him,
To be commander over powers in France.
But he——
KING : Good Lincoln, prithee, pause a while !
Even in thine eyes I read what thou wouldst speak.
I know how Lacy did neglect our love,
Ran himself deeply, in the highest degree,
Into vile treason——
LINCOLN : Is he not a traitor ?
KING : Lincoln, he was ; now have we pardoned him.
'Twas not a base want of true valour's fire,
That held him out of France, but love's desire.
LINCOLN : I will not bear his shame upon my back.
KING : Nor shalt thou, Lincoln ; I forgive you both.
LINCOLN : Then, good my liege, forbid the boy to wed
One whose mean birth will much disgrace his bed.
KING : Are they not married ?
LINCOLN : No, my liege.
BOTH : We are.
KING : Shall I divorce them then ? O be it far,
That any hand on earth should dare untie
The sacred knot, knit by God's majesty ;
I would not for my crown disjoin their hands,
That are conjoined in holy nuptial bands.
How say'st thou, Lacy, wouldst thou lose thy Rose ?
LACY : Not for all India's wealth, my sovereign.
KING : But Rose, I am sure, her Lacy would forgo ?
ROSE : If Rose were asked that question, she'd say no.
KING : You hear them, Lincoln ?
LINCOLN : Yea, my liege, I do.
KING : Yet canst thou find i' th' heart to part these two ?
Who seeks, besides you, to divorce these lovers ?
LORD MAYOR : I do, my gracious lord, I am her father.
KING : Sir Roger Oteley, our last mayor, I think ?
NOBLEMAN : The same, my liege.
KING : Would you offend Love's laws ?
Well, you shall have your wills. You sue to me,
To prohibit the match. Soft, let me see—
You both are married, Lacy, art thou not ?
LACY : I am, dread sovereign.
KING : Then, upon thy life,
I charge thee not to call this woman wife.
LORD MAYOR : I thank your grace.

ROSE : O my most gracious lord ! [*Kneels.*
KING : Nay, Rose, never woo me ; I tell you true,
Although as yet I am a bachelor,
Yet I believe, I shall not marry you.
ROSE : Can you divide the body from the soul,
Yet make the body live ?
KING : Yea, so profound ?
I cannot, Rose, but you I must divide.
This fair maid, bridegroom, cannot be your bride.
Are you pleased, Lincoln ? Oteley, are you pleased ?
BOTH : Yes, my lord.
KING : Then must my heart be eased ;
For, credit me, my conscience lives in pain,
Till these whom I divorced, be joined again.
Lacy, give me thy hand ; Rose, lend me thine !
Be what you would be ! Kiss now ! So, that's fine.
At night, lovers, to bed !—Now, let me see,
Which of you all mislikes this harmony.
LORD MAYOR : Will you then take from me my child perforce ?
KING : Why, tell me, Oteley : shines not Lacy's name
As bright in the world's eye as the gay beams
Of any citizen ?
LINCOLN : Yea, but, my gracious lord,
I do mislike the match far more than he ;
Her blood is too too base.
KING : Lincoln, no more.
Dost thou not know that love respects no blood,
Cares not for difference of birth or state ?
The maid is young, well born, fair, virtuous,
A worthy bride for any gentleman.
Besides, your nephew for her sake did stoop
To bare necessity, and, as I hear,
Forgetting honours and all courtly pleasures,
To gain her love, became a shoemaker.
As for the honour which he lost in France,
Thus I redeem it : Lacy, kneel thee down !—
Arise, Sir Rowland Lacy ! Tell me now,
Tell me in earnest, Oteley, canst thou chide,
Seeing thy Rose a lady and a bride ?
LORD MAYOR : I am content with what your grace hath done.
LINCOLN : And I, my liege, since there's no remedy.
KING : Come on, then, all shake hands : I'll have you friends ;
Where there is much love, all discord ends.
What says my mad lord mayor to all this love ?
EYRE : O my liege, this honour you have done to my fine journeyman here, Rowland Lacy, and all these favours which you have shown to me this day in my poor house, will make Simon Eyre live longer by one dozen of warm summers more than he should.
KING : Nay, my mad lord mayor, that shall be thy name,
If any grace of mine can length thy life,
One honour more I'll do thee : that new building,
Which at thy cost in Cornhill is erected,
Shall take a name from us ; we'll have it called

The Leadenhall, because in digging it
You found the lead that covereth the same.

EYRE : I thank your majesty.

MARGERY : God bless your grace !

KING : Lincoln, a word with you !

Enter HODGE, FIRK, RALPH, *and more* SHOEMAKERS.

EYRE : How now, my mad knaves ? Peace, speak softly, yonder is the king.

KING : With the old troop which there we keep in pay,
We will incorporate a new supply.
Before one summer more pass o'er my head,
France shall repent England was injured.
What are all those ?

LACY : All shoemakers, my liege,
Sometime my fellows ; in their companies
I lived as merry as an emperor.

KING : My mad lord mayor, are all these shoemakers ?

EYRE : All shoemakers, my liege ; all gentlemen of the Gentle Craft, true Trojans, courageous cordwainers ; they all kneel to the shrine of holy Saint Hugh.

ALL THE SHOEMAKERS : God save your majesty !

KING : Mad Simon, would they anything with us ?

EYRE : Mum, mad knaves ! Not a word ! I'll do 't ; I warrant you.—They are all beggars, my liege ; all for themselves, and I for them all, on both my knees do entreat, that for the honour of poor Simon Eyre and the good of his brethren, these mad knaves, your grace would vouchsafe some privilege to my new Leadenhall, that it may be lawful for us to buy and sell leather there two days a week.

KING : Mad Sim, I grant your suit, you shall have patent
To hold two market-days in Leadenhall,
Mondays and Fridays, those shall be the times.
Will this content you ?

ALL : Jesus bless your grace !

EYRE : In the name of these my poor brethren shoemakers, I most humbly thank your grace. But before I rise, seeing you are in the giving vein and we in the begging, grant Sim Eyre one boon more.

KING : What is it, my lord mayor ?

EYRE : Vouchsafe to taste of a poor banquet that stands sweetly waiting for your sweet presence.

KING : I shall undo thee, Eyre, only with feasts ;
Already have I been too troublesome ;
Say, have I not ?

EYRE : O my dear king, Sim Eyre was taken unawares upon a day of shroving, which I promised long ago to the prentices of London.

For, an't please your highness, in time past,
I bare the water-tankard, and my coat
Sits not a whit the worse upon my back ;
And then, upon a morning, some mad boys,
It was Shrove Tuesday, even as 'tis now,

Gave me my breakfast, and I swore then by the stopple of my tankard, if ever I came to be lord mayor of London, I would feast all the prentices. This day, my liege, I did it, and the slaves had an hundred tables five times covered ; they are gone home and vanished ;

Yet add more honour to the Gentle Trade,
Taste of Eyre's banquet, Simon's happy made.

KING : Eyre, I will taste of thy banquet, and will say,
I have not met more pleasure on a day.
Friends of the Gentle Craft, thanks to you all,
Thanks, my kind lady mayoress, for our cheer.—
Come, lords, a while let's revel it at home !
When all our sports and banquetings are done,
Wars must right wrongs which Frenchmen have begun. [*Exeunt.*

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c. 1606

A YORKSHIRE TRAGEDY

(AUTHOR UNKNOWN)

"Walter Calverley of Calverley in Yorkshire Esquier, murdered 2 of his young children, stabbed his wife into the bone with full purpose to have murdred her, and instantly went from his house to have slaine his youngest child at nurse, but was prevented. For which fact at his triall in Yorke hee stood mute, and was judged to be prest to death, according to which judgment he was executed at the castell of Yorke the 5th of August."

This play was founded on the facts thus recorded in *Stowe's Chronicle*, for the year 1604. It would appear to have been acted, in a triple or quadruple bill, within two years of the actual event, and was published in 1608 as "by William Shakespere." In essential features, it is unlike anything we know Shakespeare to have written. In particular, Shakespeare was never a realist, in the limited sense in which this grim domestic tragedy is "realistic." His imagination was too free. The play has been attributed, with more plausibility, to Thomas Heywood, the author of *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, and a specialist in domestic tragedy. Probably it was the work of some unknown "lesser light" of the period. In the prodigal output of plays, and the stress of life generally, little consideration was shown for the curiosity of posterity.

A YORKSHIRE TRAGEDY

Characters

HUSBAND
MASTER OF A COLLEGE
A KNIGHT, *a Magistrate*
SEVERAL GENTLEMEN
OLIVER, RALPH, SAMUEL, *Servants*
Other SERVANTS and OFFICERS
A LITTLE BOY, &c.
WIFE
MAID SERVANT

Scene.—CALVERLY, in Yorkshire.

ACT I

SCENE I.—*A Room in Calverly Hall.*

Enter OLIVER *and* RALPH.

OLIV. : Sirrah Ralph, my young mistress is in such a pitiful passionate humour for the long absence of her love—

RALPH : Why, can you blame her? Why, apples hanging longer on the tree than when they are ripe, make so many fallings ; so mad wenches, because they are not gathered in time, are fain to drop off themselves, and then 'tis common you know for every man to take them up.

OLIV. : Mass thou say'st true, 'tis common indeed. But sirrah, is neither our young master return'd, nor our fellow Sam come from London?

RALPH : Neither of either, as the puritan bawd says. 'Slid I hear Sam. Sam's come ; here he is ; come i' faith : now my nose itches for news.

OLIV. : And so does mine elbow.

SAM (*within*) : Where are you there? Boy, look you walk my horse with discretion. I have rid him simply : I warrant his skin sticks to his back with very heat. If he should catch cold and get the cough of the lungs, I were well served, were I not?

Enter SAM.

What, Ralph and Oliver!

BOTH : Honest fellow Sam, welcome i' faith. What tricks hast thou brought from London?

SAM : You see I am hang'd after the truest fashion ; three hats, and two glasses bobbing upon them ; two rebato wires upon my breast, a cap-case by my side, a brush at my back, an almanack in my pocket, and three ballads in my codpiece. Nay, I am the true picture of a common serving-man.

OLIV. : I'll swear thou art ; thou mayst set up when thou wilt : there's many a one begins with less, I can tell thee, that proves a rich man ere he dies. But what's the news from London, Sam?

RALPH : Ay, that's well said ; what's the news from London, sirrah? My young mistress keeps such a puling for her love.

SAM : Why the more fool she ; ay, the more ninnyhammer she.

OLIV. : Why, Sam, why?

SAM : Why, he is married to another long ago.

BOTH : I' faith? You jest.

SAM : Why, did you not know that till now? Why, he's married, beats his wife, and has two or three children by her. For you must note, that any woman bears the more when she is beaten.

RALPH : Ay, that's true, for she bears the blows.

OLIV. : Sirrah Sam, I would not for two years' wages my young mistress knew so much ; she'd run upon the left hand of her wit, and ne'er be her own woman again.

SAM : And I think she were blest in her cradle, had he never come in her bed. Why, he has consumed all, pawn'd his lands, and made his university brother stand in wax for him :[1] there's a fine phrase for a scrivener. Puh! he owes more than his skin is worth.

OLIV. : Is't possible?

SAM : Nay, I'll tell you moreover, he calls his wife whore, as familiarly as one would call Moll and Doll ; and his children bastards, as naturally as can be. —But what have we here? I thought 'twas something pulled down my breeches ; I quite forgot my two poking sticks :[2] these came from London. Now anything is good here that comes from London.

OLIV. : Ay, far fetch'd, you know, Sam.[3]—But speak in your conscience i' faith ; have not we as good poking sticks i' the country as need to be put in the fire?

SAM : The mind of a thing is all ; the mind of a thing is all ; and as thou saidst even now, far fetch'd are the best things for ladies.

[1] Enter into a bond.
[2] These were used to adjust the plaits of the ruff.
[3] Alluding to the proverb, "Far fetched and dear bought."

OLIV. : Ay, and for waiting gentlewomen too.
SAM : But Ralph, what, is our beer sour this thunder ?
RALPH : No, no, it holds countenance yet.
SAM : Why then, follow me ; I'll teach you the finest humour to be drunk in : I learned it at London last week.
BOTH : I' faith ? Let's hear it, let's hear it.
SAM : The bravest humour ! 'twould do a man good to be drunk in it : they call it knighting in London, when they drink upon their knees.
BOTH : 'Faith that's excellent.
SAM : Come, follow me ; I'll give you all the degrees of it in order. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment in the same.*

Enter WIFE.

WIFE : What will become of us ? All will away :
My husband never ceases in expense,
Both to consume his credit and his house ;
And 'tis set down by heaven's just decree,
That Riot's child must needs be beggary.
Are these the virtues that his youth did promise ?
Dice and voluptuous meetings, midnight revels,
Taking his bed with surfeits ; ill beseeming
The ancient honour of his house and name ?
His fortunes cannot answer his expense.
And this not all, but that which kills me most,
When he recounts his losses and false fortunes,
The weakness of his state so much dejected,
Not as a man repentant, but half mad,
He sits, and sullenly locks up his arms ;
Forgetting heaven, looks downward ; which makes him
Appear so dreadful that he frights my heart :
Walks heavily, as if his soul were earth ;
Not penitent for those his sins are past,
But vex'd his money cannot make them last :
A fearful melancholy, ungodly sorrow.
O, yonder he comes ; now in despite of ills
I'll speak to him, and I will hear him speak,
And do my best to drive it from his heart.

Enter HUSBAND.

HUS. : Pox o' the last throw ! It made five hundred angels
Vanish from my sight. I'm damn'd, I'm damn'd ;
The angels[1] have forsook me. Nay it is
Certainly true ; for he that has no coin
Is damn'd in this world ; he is gone, he's gone.
WIFE : Dear husband.
HUS. : O ! most punishment of all, I have a wife.
WIFE : I do entreat you, as you love your soul,
Tell me the cause of this your discontent.
HUS. : A vengeance strip thee naked ! thou art cause,
Effect, quality, property ; thou, thou, thou. [*Exit.*

[1] **A quibble between *angels* of heaven, and *angel*, the gold coin.**

WIFE : Bad turn'd to worse ; both beggary of the soul
And of the body ;—and so much unlike
Himself at first, as if some vexed spirit
Had got his form upon him. He comes again.

Re-enter HUSBAND.

He says I am the cause : I never yet
Spoke less than words of duty and of love.

HUS. : If marriage be honourable, then cuckolds are honourable, for they cannot be made without marriage. Fool ! what meant I to marry to get beggars ? Now must my eldest son be a knave or nothing ; he cannot live upon the fool, for he will have no land to maintain him. That mortgage sits like a snaffle upon mine inheritance, and makes me chew upon iron. My second son must be a promoter ;[1] and my third a thief, or an under-putter ; a slave pander. Oh beggary, beggary, to what base uses dost thou put a man ! I think the devil scorns to be a bawd ; he bears himself more proudly, has more care of his credit. Base, slavish, abject, filthy poverty !

WIFE : Good Sir, by all our vows I do beseech you,
Show me the true cause of your discontent.

HUS. : Money, money, money ; and thou must supply me.

WIFE : Alas, I am the least cause of your discontent ;
Yet what is mine, either in rings or jewels,
Use to your own desire ; but I beseech you,
As you are a gentleman by many bloods,[2]
Though I myself be out of your respect,
Think on the state of the three lovely boys
You have been father to.

HUS. : Puh ! bastards, bastards, bastards ; begot in tricks, begot in tricks.

WIFE : Heaven knows how those words wrong me : but I may
Endure these griefs among a thousand more.
O call to mind your lands already mortgaged,
Yourself wound into debts, your hopeful brother
At the university in bonds for you,
Like to be seiz'd upon ; and——

HUS. : Have done, thou harlot,
Whom though for fashion-sake I married,
I never could abide. Think'st thou, thy words
Shall kill my pleasures ? Fall off to thy friends ;
Thou and thy bastards beg ; I will not bate
A whit in humour. Midnight, still I love you,
And revel in your company ! Curb'd in !
Shall it be said in all societies,
That I broke custom ? that I flagg'd in money ?
No, those thy jewels I will play as freely
As when my state was fullest.

WIFE : Be it so.

HUS. : Nay, I protest (and take that for an earnest) [*Spurns her.*
I will for ever hold thee in contempt,
And never touch the sheets that cover thee,
But be divorced in bed, till thou consent
Thy dowry shall be sold, to give new life
Unto those pleasures which I most affect.

[1] An informer. [2] *i.e.* by many descents.

WIFE : Sir, do but turn a gentle eye on me,
And what the law shall give me leave to do,
You shall command.
HUS. : Look it be done. Shall I want dust,
And like a slave wear nothing in my pockets
[*Holds his hands in his pockets.*
But my bare hands, to fill them up with nails ?
O much against my blood ![1] Let it be done ;
I was never made to be a looker on,
A bawd to dice ; I'll shake the drabs myself,
And make them yield : I say, look it be done.
WIFE : I take my leave : it shall. [*Exit.*
HUS. : Speedily, speedily.
I hate the very hour I chose a wife :
A trouble, trouble ! Three children, like three evils,
Hang on me. Fie, fie, fie ! Strumpet and bastards !

Enter three GENTLEMEN.

Strumpet and bastards !
1 GENT. : Still do these loathsome thoughts jar on your tongue ?
Yourself to stain the honour of your wife,
Nobly descended ? Those whom men call mad,
Endanger others ; but he's more than mad
That wounds himself ; whose own words do proclaim
Scandals unjust, to soil his better name
It is not fit ; I pray, forsake it.
2 GENT. : Good Sir, let modesty reprove you.
3 GENT. : Let honest kindness sway so much with you.
HUS. : Good den ;[2] I thank you, Sir ; how do you ? Adieu !
I am glad to see you. Farewell instructions, admonitions !
[*Exeunt* GENTLEMEN.

Enter a SERVANT.

How now, sirrah ? What would you ?
SER. : Only to certify you, Sir, that my mistress was met by the way, by them who were sent for her up to London by her honourable uncle, your worship's late guardian.
HUS. : So, Sir, then she is gone ; and so may you be ;
But let her look the thing be done she wots of,
Or hell will stand more pleasant than her house
At home. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter a GENTLEMAN.

GENT. : Well or ill met, I care not.
HUS. : No, nor I.
GENT. : I am come with confidence to chide you.
HUS. : Who ? me ?
Chide me ? Do't finely, then ; let it not move me :
For if thou chid'st me angry, I shall strike.
GENT. : Strike thine own follies, for 'tis they deserve
To be well beaten. We are now in private ;

1 *i.e.* my inclination. 2 Good even.

There's none but thou and I. Thou art fond and peevish ;[1]
An unclean rioter ; thy lands and credit
Lie now both sick of a consumption :
I am sorry for thee. That man spends with shame
That with his riches doth consume his name ;
And such art thou.

HUS. : Peace.

GENT. : No, thou shalt hear me further.
Thy father's and forefathers' worthy honours,
Which were our county's monuments, our grace,
Follies in thee begin now to deface.
The spring-time of thy youth did fairly promise
Such a most fruitful summer to thy friends,
It scarce can enter into men's beliefs,
Such dearth should hang upon thee. We that see it,
Are sorry to believe it. In thy change,
This voice into all places will be hurl'd—
Thou and the devil have deceived the world.

HUS. : I'll not endure thee.

GENT. : But of all the worst,
Thy virtuous wife, right honourably allied,
Thou hast proclaim'd a strumpet.

HUS. : Nay, then, I know thee ;
Thou art her champion, thou ; her private friend ;
The party you wot on.[2]

GENT. : O ignoble thought !
I am past my patient blood. Shall I stand idle,
And see my reputation touch'd to death ?

HUS. : It has gall'd you, this ; has it ?

GENT. : No, monster ; I will prove
My thoughts did only tend to virtuous love.

HUS. : Love of her virtues ? there it goes.

GENT. : Base spirit,
To lay thy hate upon the fruitful honour
Of thine own bed ! [*They fight, and the* HUSBAND *is hurt.*

HUS. : Oh !

GENT. : Wilt thou yield it yet ?

HUS. : Sir, Sir, I have not done with you.

GENT. : I hope, nor ne'er shall do. [*They fight again.*

HUS. : Have you got tricks ? Are you in cunning with me ?

GENT. : No, plain and right :
He needs no cunning[3] that for truth doth fight. [HUSBAND *falls down.*

HUS. : Hard fortune ! am I levell'd with the ground ?

GENT. : Now, Sir, you lie at mercy.

HUS. : Ay, you slave.

GENT. : Alas, that hate should bring us to our grave !
You see, my sword's not thirsty for your life :
I am sorrier for your wound than you yourself.
You're of a virtuous house ; show virtuous deeds ;
'Tis not your honour, 'tis your folly bleeds.
Much good has been expected in your life ;
Cancel not all men's hopes : you have a wife,

[1] *i.e.* weak and silly. [2] *i.e.* you know whom I mean. [3] *i.e.* great skill.

Kind and obedient ; heap not wrongful shame
On her and your posterity ; let only sin be sore,
And by this fall, rise never to fall more.
And so I leave you. [*Exit.*

HUS. : Has the dog left me, then,
After his tooth has left me ? O, my heart
Would fain leap after him. Revenge, I say ;
I'm mad to be revenged. My strumpet wife,
It is thy quarrel that rips thus my flesh,
And makes my breast spit blood ;—but thou shalt bleed.
Vanquish'd ? got down ? unable even to speak ?
Surely 'tis want of money makes men weak :
Ay, 'twas that o'erthrew me : I'd ne'er been down else. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the same.*

Enter WIFE, *in a riding suit, and a* SERVANT.

SER. : 'Faith, mistress, if it might not be presumption
In me to tell you so, for his excuse
You had small reason, knowing his abuse.
WIFE : I grant I had ; but alas,
Why should our faults at home be spread abroad ?
'Tis grief enough within doors. At first sight
Mine uncle could run o'er his prodigal life
As perfectly as if his serious eye
Had number'd all his follies :
Knew of his mortgaged lands, his friends in bonds,
Himself wither'd with debts ; and in that minute
Had I added his usage and unkindness,
'Twould have confounded every thought of good :
Where now, fathering his riots on his youth,
Which time and tame experience will shake off,—
Guessing his kindness to me (as I smooth'd him
With all the skill I had, though his deserts
Are in form uglier than an unshaped bear),
He's ready to prefer him to some office
And place at court ; good and sure relief
To all his stooping fortunes. 'Twill be a means, I hope,
To make new league between us, and redeem
His virtues with his lands.
SER. : I should think so, mistress. If he should not now be kind to you, and love you, and cherish you up, I should think the devil himself kept open house in him.
WIFE : I doubt not but he will. Now pr'ythee leave me ; I think I hear him coming.
SER. : I am gone. [*Exit.*
WIFE : By this good means I shall preserve my lands,
And free my husband out of usurers' hands.
Now there's no need of sale ; my uncle's kind :
I hope, if aught, this will content his mind.
Here comes my husband.

Enter HUSBAND.

HUS. : Now, are you come ? Where's the money ? Let's see the money. Is the

rubbish sold? those wise-acres, your lands? Why then? The money? Where is it? Pour it down; down with it, down with it: I say, pour't on the ground; let's see it, let's see it.

WIFE: Good Sir, keep but in patience, and I hope my words shall like[1] you well. I bring you better comfort than the sale of my dowry.

HUS.: Ha! What's that?

WIFE: Pray, do not fright me, Sir, but vouchsafe me hearing. My uncle, glad of your kindness to me and mild usage (for so I made it to him), hath, in pity of your declining fortunes, provided a place for you at court, of worth and credit; which so much overjoyed me—

HUS.: Out on thee, filth! over and overjoyed, when I'm in torment? (*Spurns her.*) Thou politic whore, subtiler than nine devils, was this thy journey to nunck? to set down the history of me, of my state and fortunes? Shall I that dedicated myself to pleasure, be now confined in service? to crouch and stand, like an old man, i' the hams;[2] my hat off? I that could never abide to uncover my head i' the church? Base slut! this fruit bear thy complaints.

WIFE: O, heaven knows
That my complaints were praises, and best words,
Of you and your estate. Only, my friends
Knew of your mortgaged lands, and were possess'd
Of every accident before I came.
If you suspect it but a plot in me,
To keep my dowry, or for mine own good,
Or my poor children's (though it suits a mother
To show a natural care in their reliefs),
Yet I'll forget myself to calm your blood:
Consume it, as your pleasure counsels you.
And all I wish even clemency affords;
Give me but pleasant looks and modest words.

HUS.: Money, whore, money, or I'll— [*Draws a dagger.*

Enter a SERVANT *hastily.*

What the devil! How now! thy hasty news?

SER.: May it please you, Sir—

HUS.: What! may I not look upon my dagger?
Speak, villain, or I will execute the point on thee:
Quick, short.

SER.: Why, Sir, a gentleman from the University stays below to speak with you. [*Exit.*

HUS.: From the University? so; University:—that long word runs through me. [*Exit.*

WIFE: Was ever wife so wretchedly beset?
Had not this news stepp'd in between, the point
Had offer'd violence unto my breast.
That which some women call great misery,
Would show but little here; would scarce be seen
Among my miseries. I may compare,
For wretched fortunes, with all wives that are.
Nothing will please him, until all be nothing.
He calls it slavery to be preferr'd;
A place of credit, a base servitude.

[1] Please. [2] *i.e.* with his knees bent.

What shall become of me, and my poor children,
Two here, and one at nurse? my pretty beggars!
I see how Ruin with a palsied hand
Begins to shake this ancient seat to dust:
The heavy weight of sorrow draws my lids
Over my dankish[1] eyes: I can scarce see;
This grief will last;—it wakes and sleeps with me. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*Another Apartment in the same.*

Enter HUSBAND *and the* MASTER *of a College.*

HUS.: Please you draw near, Sir; you're exceeding welcome.

MAST.: That's my doubt; I fear I come not to be welcome.

HUS.: Yes, howsoever.

MAST.: 'Tis not my fashion, Sir, to dwell in long circumstance, but to be plain and effectual; therefore to the purpose. The cause of my setting forth was piteous and lamentable. That hopeful young gentleman your brother, whose virtues we all love dearly, through your default and unnatural negligence lies in bond executed for your debt,—a prisoner; all his studies amazed,[2] his hope struck dead, and the pride of his youth muffled in these dark clouds of oppression.

HUS.: Umph, umph, umph!

MAST.: O you have killed the towardest hope of all our University: wherefore, without repentance and amends, expect ponderous and sudden judgments to fall grievously upon you. Your brother, a man who profited in his divine employments, and might have made ten thousand souls fit for heaven, is now by your careless courses cast into prison, which you must answer for; and assure your spirit it will come home at length.

HUS.: O God! oh!

MAST.: Wise men think ill of you; others speak ill of you; no man loves you: nay, even those whom honesty condemns condemn you: And take this from the virtuous affection I bear your brother; never look for prosperous hour, good thoughts, quiet sleep, contented walks, nor anything that makes man perfect,[3] till you redeem him. What is your answer? How will you bestow him? Upon desperate misery, or better hopes?—I suffer till I hear your answer.

HUS.: Sir, you have much wrought with me; I feel you in my soul: you are your art's master. I never had sense till now; your syllables have cleft me. Both for your words and pains I thank you. I cannot but acknowledge grievous wrongs done to my brother; mighty, mighty, mighty, mighty wrongs. Within, there.

Enter a SERVANT.

HUS.: Fill me a bowl of wine. (*Exit* SERVANT.) Alas, poor brother, bruised with an execution for my sake!

MAST.: A bruise indeed makes many a mortal sore,
Till the grave cure them.

Re-enter SERVANT *with wine.*

HUS.: Sir, I begin to you; you've chid your welcome.

MAST.: I could have wished it better for your sake. I pledge you, Sir:—To the kind man in prison.

[1] *i.e.* moistened. [2] *i.e.* stunned. [3] *i.e.* perfectly happy.

HUS. : Let it be so. Now, Sir, if you please to spend but a few minutes in a walk about my grounds below, my man here shall attend you. I doubt not but by that time to be furnished of a sufficient answer, and therein my brother fully satisfied.

MAST. : Good Sir, in that the angels would be pleased,
And the world's murmurs calm'd ; and I should say,
I set forth then upon a lucky day. [*Exeunt* MASTER *and* SERVANT.

HUS. : O thou confused man ! Thy pleasant sins have undone thee ; thy damnation has beggared thee. That heaven should say we must not sin, and yet made women ! give our senses way to find pleasure, which being found, confounds us ! Why should we know those things[1] so much misuse us ? O, would virtue had been forbidden ! We should then have proved all virtuous ; for 'tis our blood to love what we are forbidden. Had not drunkenness been forbidden, what man would have been fool to a beast, and zany to a swine, —to show tricks in the mire ? What is there in three dice,[2] to make a man draw thrice three thousand acres into the compass of a little round table, and with the gentleman's palsy in the hand shake out his posterity, thieves or beggars ? 'Tis done ; I have don't i' faith : terrible, horrible misery !— How well[3] was I left ! Very well, very well. My lands showed like a full moon about me ; but now the moon's in the last quarter,—waning, waning ; and I am mad to think that moon was mine ; mine and my father's, and my fore-fathers' ; generations, generations.—Down goes the house of us ; down, down it sinks. Now is the name a beggar; begs in me. That name which hundreds of years has made this shire famous, in me and my posterity runs out. In my seed five are made miserable besides myself ; my riot is now my brother's gaoler, my wife's sighing, my three boys' penury, and mine own confusion.
Why sit my hairs upon my cursed head ? [*Tears his hair.*
Will not this poison scatter them ?[4] O, my brother's
In execution among devils that
Stretch him and make him give ;[5] and I in want,
Not able for to live, not to redeem him !
Divines and dying men may talk of hell,
But in my heart its several torments dwell ;
Slavery and misery. Who, in this case,
Would not take up money upon his soul ?
Pawn his salvation, live at interest ?
I that did ever in abundance dwell,
For me to want, exceeds the throes of hell.

Enter a little BOY *with a top and scourge.*

SON : What ail you, father ? Are you not well ? I cannot scourge my top as long as you stand so. You take up all the room with your wide legs. Puh ! you cannot make me afraid with this ; I fear no vizards, nor bugbears.[6]

[*He takes up the child by the skirts of his long coat with one hand, and draws his dagger with the other.*

HUS. : Up, Sir, for here thou hast no inheritance left.[7]

SON : O, what will you do, father ? I am your white boy.

HUS. : Thou shalt be my red boy ; take that. [*Strikes him.*

1 (That.)
2 Passage, or pass-dice, was played with three dice.
3 (Off.)
4 Alluding to the effects of some kinds of poison.
5 Leather when stretched is said to give.
6 The child mistakes the distortions of real passion for grimaces exhibited only with a sportive intention to frighten him.
7 He means that his child having nothing left on earth, he will send him to heaven.

SON : O, you hurt me, father.
HUS. : My eldest beggar.
Thou shalt not live to ask an usurer bread ;
To cry at a great man's gate ; or follow,
Good your honour, by a coach ; no, nor your brother :
'Tis charity to brain you.
SON : How shall I learn, now my head's broke ?
HUS. : Bleed, bleed, [*Stabs him.*
Rather than beg. Be not thy name's disgrace :
Spurn thou thy fortunes first ; if they be base,
Come view thy second brother's. Fates ! My children's blood
Shall spin into your faces ; you shall see,
How confidently we scorn beggary ! [*Exit with his* SON.

SCENE V

A MAID *discovered with a Child in her arms ; the* MOTHER *on a couch by her, asleep.*

MAID : Sleep, sweet babe ; sorrow makes thy mother sleep :
It bodes small good when heaviness falls so deep.
Hush, pretty boy ; thy hopes might have been better.
'Tis lost at dice, what ancient honour won :
Hard, when the father plays away the son !
Nothing but misery serves in this house ;
Ruin and desolation. Oh !

Enter HUSBAND, *with his* SON *bleeding.*

HUS. : Whore, give me that boy. [*Strives with her for the child.*
MAID : O help, help ! Out alas ! murder, murder !
HUS. : Are you gossiping, you prating, sturdy quean ?
I'll break your clamour with your neck. Down stairs ;
Tumble, tumble headlong. So :—
[*He throws her down and stabs the child.*
The surest way to charm[1] a woman's tongue,
Is—break her neck : a politician did it.[2]
SON : Mother, mother ; I am kill'd, mother. [WIFE *awakes.*
WIFE : Ha, who's that cried ? O me ! my children !
Both, both, bloody, bloody ! [*Catches up the youngest child.*
HUS. : Strumpet, let go the boy, let go the beggar.
WIFE : O my sweet husband !
HUS. : Filth, harlot.
WIFE : O, what will you do, dear husband ?
HUS. : Give me the bastard.
WIFE : Your own sweet boy—
HUS. : There are too many beggars.
WIFE : Good my husband—
HUS. : Dost thou prevent me still ?
WIFE : O God !
HUS. : Have at his heart. [*Stabs at the child in her arms.*
WIFE : O, my dear boy !

[1] *i.e.* to silence.
[2] The reference here is to the Earl of Leicester, the death of whose first wife is said, in the celebrated libel called *Leicester's Commonwealth*, to have been occasioned by her being thrown down stairs at Cumnor, by her husband's order.

HUS. : Brat, thou shalt not live to shame thy house—
WIFE : Oh heaven ! [*She is hurt, and sinks down.*
HUS. : And perish !—Now be gone :
There's whores enough, and want would make thee one.

Enter a SERVANT.

SER. : O Sir, what deeds are these ?
HUS. : Base slave, my vassal !
Com'st thou between my fury to question me ?
SER. : Were you the devil, I would hold you, Sir.
HUS. : Hold me ? Presumption ! I'll undo thee for it.
SER. : 'Sblood, you have undone us all, Sir.
HUS. : Tug at thy master ?
SER. : Tug at a monster.
HUS. : Have I no power ? shall my slave fetter me ?
SER. : Nay then the devil wrestles ; I am thrown.
HUS. : O villain ! now I'll tug thee, now I'll tear thee ;
Set quick spurs to my vassal ;[1] bruise him, trample him.
So ; I think thou wilt not follow me in haste.
My horse stands ready saddled. Away, away ;
Now to my brat at nurse, my sucking beggar :
Fates, I'll not leave you one to trample on ! [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.—*Court before the House.*

Enter HUSBAND ; *to him the* MASTER *of the College.*

MAST. : How is it with you, Sir ?
Methinks you look of a distracted colour.
HUS. : Who, I, Sir ? 'Tis but your fancy.
Please you walk in, Sir, and I'll soon resolve you :
I want one small part to make up the sum,
And then my brother shall rest satisfied.
MAST. : I shall be glad to see it : Sir, I'll attend you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—*A Room in the House.*

The WIFE, SERVANT, *and* CHILDREN *discovered.*

SER. : Oh, I am scarce able to heave up myself,
He has so bruised me with his devilish weight,
And torn my flesh with his blood-hasty spur :
A man before of easy constitution,
Till now Hell-power supplied, to his soul's wrong :
O how damnation can make weak men strong !

Enter the MASTER *of the College and two* SERVANTS.

SER. : O the most piteous deed, Sir, since you came !
MAST. : A deadly greeting ! Hath he summ'd up these
To satisfy his brother ? Here's another ;
And by the bleeding infants, the dead mother.
WIFE : Oh ! ho !
MAST. : Surgeons ! surgeons ! she recovers life :—
One of his men all faint and bloodied !

[1] The ancient spurs had rowels whose points were more than an inch long.

SER. : Follow ; our murderous master has took horse
To kill his child at nurse. O, follow quickly.
MAST. : I am the readiest ; it shall be my charge
To raise the town upon him.
SER. : Good Sir, do follow him.

[*Exeunt* MASTER *and two* SERVANTS.

WIFE : O my children !
SER. : How is it with my most afflicted mistress ?
WIFE : Why do I now recover ? Why half live,
To see my children bleed before mine eyes ?
A sight able to kill a mother's breast, without
An executioner.—What, art thou mangled too ?
SER. : I, thinking to prevent what his quick mischiefs
Had so soon acted, came and rush'd upon him.
We struggled ; but a fouler strength than his
O'erthrew me with his arms ; then did he bruise me,
And rent my flesh, and robb'd me of my hair ;
Like a man mad in execution,
Made me unfit to rise and follow him.
WIFE : What is it has beguiled him of all grace,
And stole away humanity from his breast ?
To slay his children, purpose to kill his wife,
And spoil his servants—

Enter a SERVANT.

SER. : Please you to leave this most accursed place :
A surgeon waits within.
WIFE : Willing to leave it ?
'Tis guilty of sweet blood, innocent blood :
Murder has took this chamber with full hands,
And will ne'er out as long as the house stands. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII.—*A High Road.*

Enter HUSBAND. *He falls.*

HUS. : O stumbling jade, the spavin overtake thee !
The fifty diseases stop thee ![1]
Oh, I am sorely bruised ! Plague founder thee !
Thou runn'st at ease and pleasure. Heart of chance !
To throw me now, within a flight[2] o' the town,
In such plain even ground too ! 'Sfoot, a man
May dice upon it, and throw away the meadows.[3]
Filthy beast !
(*Cry within.*) Follow, follow, follow.
HUS. : Ha ! I hear sounds of men, like hue and cry.
Up, up, and struggle to thy horse ; make on ;
Dispatch that little beggar, and all's done,
(*Cry within.*) Here, here ; this way, this way.
HUS. : At my back ! Oh,
What fate have I ! my limbs deny me go.
My will is barred ; beggary claims a part.
O could I here reach to the infant's heart !

[1] There is an old book entitled the *Fifty Diseases of a Horse*, by Gervase Markham.
[2] *i.e.* an arrow's reach. [3] Play them away.

Enter the MASTER *of the College, three* GENTLEMEN, *and Attendants with halberds.*

ALL : Here, here ; yonder, yonder.
MAST. : Unnatural, flinty, more than barbarous !
The Scythians, or the marble-hearted Fates,
Could not have acted more remorseless deeds,
In their relentless natures, than these of thine.
Was this the answer I long waited on ?
The satisfaction for thy prison'd brother ?
HUS. : Why, he can have no more of us than our skins,
And some of them want but fleaing.
1 GENT. : Great sins have made him impudent.
MAST. : He has shed so much blood, that he cannot blush.
2 GENT. : Away with him, bear him to the justice's.
A gentleman of worship dwells at hand :
There shall his deeds be blazed.
HUS. : Why, all the better.
My glory 'tis to have my action known ;
I grieve for nothing, but I miss'd of one.
MAST. : There's little of a father in that grief.
Bear him away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX.—*A Room in the House of a Magistrate.*

Enter a KNIGHT *and three* GENTLEMEN.

KNIGHT : Endanger'd so his wife ? murder'd his children ?
1 GENT. : So the cry goes.
KNIGHT : I am sorry I e'er knew him ;
That ever he took life and natural being
From such an honour'd stock, and fair descent,
Till this black minute without stain or blemish.
1 GENT. : Here come the men.

Enter MASTER *of the College, &c., with the Prisoner.*

KNIGHT : The serpent of his house ![1] I am sorry
For this time, that I am in place of justice.
MAST. : Please you, Sir—
KNIGHT : Do not repeat it twice ; I know too much :
Would it had ne'er been thought on ! Sir, I bleed for you.
1 GENT. : Your father's sorrows are alive in me.
What made you show such monstrous cruelty ?
HUS. : In a word, Sir, I have consumed all, played away long-acre ; and I thought it the charitablest deed I could do, to cozen beggary, and knock my house o' the head.
KNIGHT : O, in a cooler blood you will repent it.
HUS. : I repent now that one is left unkill'd ;
My brat at nurse. I would full fain have wean'd him.
KNIGHT : Well, I do not think, but in to-morrow's judgment,
The terror will sit closer to your soul,
When the dread thought of death remembers[2] you :
To further which, take this sad voice from me,
Never was act play'd more unnaturally.
HUS. : I thank you, Sir.

[1] Because he had destroyed his whole family, as the serpent of Aaron.
[2] *i.e.* comes upon you.

NIGHT : Go lead him to the gaol :
Where justice claims all, there must pity fail.
US. : Come, come ; away with me. [*Exeunt* HUSBAND, *&c.*
AST. : Sir, you deserve the worship of your place :
Would all did so ! In you the law is grace.
NIGHT : It is my wish it should be so.—Ruinous man !
The desolation of his house, the blot
Upon his predecessors' honour'd name !
That man is nearest shame, that is past shame.[1] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE X.—*Before Calverly Hall.*

nter HUSBAND *guarded*, MASTER *of the College*, GENTLEMEN, *and Attendants.*

US. : I am right against my house,—seat of my ancestors :
I hear my wife's alive, but much endanger'd.
Let me entreat to speak with her, before
The prison gripe me.

His WIFE *is brought in.*

ENT. : See, here she comes of herself.
VIFE : O my sweet husband, my dear distressed husband,
Now in the hands of unrelenting laws,
My greatest sorrow, my extremest bleeding ;
Now my soul bleeds.
US. : How now ? Kind to me ? Did I not wound thee ?
Left thee for dead ?
VIFE : Tut far, far greater wounds did my breast feel ;
Unkindness strikes a deeper wound than steel.
You have been still unkind to me.
US. : 'Faith, and so I think I have ;
I did my murders roughly out of hand,
Desperate and sudden ; but thou hast devised
A fine way now to kill me : thou hast given mine eyes
Seven wounds apiece. Now glides the devil from me,
Departs at every joint ; heaves up my nails.
O catch him torments that were ne'er invented !
Bind him one thousand more,[2] you blessed angels,
In that pit bottomless ! Let him not rise
To make men act unnatural tragedies ;
To spread into a father, and in fury
Make him his children's executioner ;
Murder his wife, his servants, and who not ?—
For that man's dark, where heaven is quite forgot.
VIFE : O my repentant husband !
US. : O my dear soul, whom I too much have wrong'd :
For death I die, and for this have I long'd.
VIFE : Thou shouldst not, be assured, for these faults die.
If the law could forgive as soon as I.
[*The two children laid out.*
US. : What sight is yonder ?
VIFE : O, our two bleeding boys,
Laid forth upon the threshold.

[1] *i.e.* nearest to *public*, who is lost to *private* shame. [2] *i.e.* years.

HUS. : Here's weight enough to make a heart-string crack.
O were it lawful that your pretty souls
Might look from heaven into your father's eyes,
Then should you see the penitent glasses melt,
And both your murders shoot upon my cheeks ![1]
But you are playing in the angels' laps,
And will not look on me, who, void of grace,
Kill'd you in beggary.
O that I might my wishes now attain.
I should then wish you living were again,
Though I did beg with you, which thing I fear'd :
O, 'twas the enemy my eyes so blear'd ![2]
O, would you could pray heaven me to forgive,
That will unto my end repentant live !
WIFE : It makes me e'en forget all other sorrows,
And live apart with this.
OFFI. : Come, will you go ?
HUS. : I'll kiss the blood I spilt, and then I'll go :
My soul is bloodied, well may my lips be so.
Farewell, dear wife ; now thou and I must part ;
I of thy wrongs repent me with my heart.
WIFE : O stay ; thou shalt not go.
HUS. : That's but in vain ; you see it must be so.
Farewell ye bloody ashes of my boys !
My punishments are their eternal joys.[3]
Let every father look into my deeds,
And then their heirs may prosper, while mine bleeds.
[*Exeunt* HUSBAND *and* OFFICERS.
WIFE : More wretched am I now in this distress,
Than former sorrows made me.
MAST. : O kind wife,
Be comforted ; one joy is yet unmurder'd ;
You have a boy at nurse ; your joy's in him.
WIFE : Dearer than all is my poor husband's life.
Heaven give my body strength, which is yet faint
With much expense of blood, and I will kneel,
Sue for his life, number up all my friends
To plead for pardon for my dear husband's life.
MAST. : Was it in man to wound so kind a creature ?
I'll ever praise a woman for thy sake.
I must return with grief ; my answer's set ;[4]
I shall bring news weighs heavier than the debt.
Two brothers, one in bond lies overthrown,
This on a deadlier execution. [*Exeunt omnes.*

1 *i.e.* blushes or tears for your murders dart along my cheeks.
2 *i.e.* the devil, who so deceived me.
3 *i.e.* that for which I shall be punished, has proved their introduction to everlasting happiness.
4 *i.e.* fixed, settled.

1609

THE SILENT WOMAN

(By BEN JONSON)

f the superior quality of the drama in the early years of the new century is n our judgment attributable to Shakespeare's influence, it is only just to record hat the leader of the movement, in the eyes of contemporaries, was his com- ade and rival, BenJonson (1573–1637). Ben Jonson was possessed of a dynamic nd dominating personality, indulged freely at the expense of his fellow play- rights—as in his scurrilous contributions to the *poetamachia* ;—but functioning, n the whole, for the good of a theatre to which his restless and erratic genius vas dedicated. Shakespeare gave : Ben Jonson demanded. He kept drama on s mettle. Pedantically exacting, frequently wide of the mark, his accomplish- ient was none the less on the grand scale. " Shakespeare wanted art," he ould assert with blunt finality. His three masterpieces *The Fox* (1605), *he Silent Woman* (1609) and *The Alchemist* (1610), at least showed that e could practise what he preached. They are perhaps the most perfect omedies in any language.

Ben Jonson's theories about drama do not matter very much. He never nderstood tragedy, and his own essays in that form are stillborn. His " Comedy f Humours," inaugurated with *Every Man in his Humour* (1598) has stood he test of time as an individual medium. Towards the end of his career, e co-operated with Inigo Jones in contriving Court *Masques*, many of which isplay an unexpected lyrical power.

His life was a full one, ranging over the callings of bricklayer, undergraduate, oldier, actor and poet-laureate. He was a sublime egoist, and we all love him s he loved Shakespeare " this side idolatry."

EPICŒNE ; OR, THE SILENT WOMAN

Characters

MOROSE, *a Gentleman that loves no noise*	PAGE *to* CLERIMONT
SIR DAUPHINE EUGENIE, *a Knight, his Nephew*	EPICŒNE, *supposed the Silent Woman*
	LADY HAUGHTY, } *Ladies Collegiates*
	LADY CENTAURE, } *Ladies Collegiates*
	MISTRESS DOL. } *Ladies Collegiates*
NED CLERIMONT, *a Gentleman, his Friend*	MAVIS, } *Ladies Collegiates*
TRUEWIT, *another Friend*	
SIR JOHN DAW, *a Knight*	MISTRESS OTTER, *the Captain's Wife,* } *Pretenders.*
SIR AMOROUS LA-FOOLE, *a Knight also*	MISTRESS TRUSTY, } *Pretenders.*
THOMAS OTTER, *a Land and Sea Captain*	*Lady* HAUGHTY'S *Woman,* } *Pretenders.*
CUTBEARD, *a Barber*	PAGES, SERVANTS, ETC.
MUTE, *one of* MOROSE'S *Servants*	
PARSON	

Scene.—LONDON.

ACT I

SCENE I.—*A Room in* CLERIMONT'S *House.*

Enter CLERIMONT, *making himself ready, followed by his* PAGE.

CLER. : Have you got the song yet perfect, I gave you, boy ?

PAGE : Yes, sir.

CLER. : Let me hear it.

PAGE : You shall, sir ; but i'faith let nobody else.

CLER. : Why, I pray ?

PAGE : It will get you the dangerous name of a poet in town, sir ; besides me a perfect deal of ill-will at the mansion you wot of, whose lady is the argument of it ; where now I am the welcomest thing under a man that comes there.

CLER. : I think ; and above a man too, if the truth were rack'd out of you.

PAGE : No, faith, I'll confess before, sir. The gentlewoman play with me, and throw me on the bed, and carry me in to my lady : and she kisses me with her oil'd face, and puts a peruke on my head ; and asks me an I will wear her gown ? and I say no : and then she hits me a blow o' the ear, and calls me Innocent ! and lets me go.

CLER. : No marvel if the door be kept shut against your master, when the entrance is so easy to you——well, sir, you shall go there no more, lest I be fain to seek your voice in my lady's rushes, a fortnight hence. Sing, sir.

[PAGE *sings*.

Still to be neat, still to be drest—

Enter TRUEWIT.

TRUE. : Why, here's the man that can melt away his time and never feels it ! What between his mistress abroad and his ingle at home, high fare, soft lodging, fine clothes, and his fiddle ; he thinks the hours have no wings, or the day no post-horse. Well, sir gallant, were you struck with the plague this minute, or condemn'd to any capital punishment to-morrow, you would begin then to think, and value every article of your time, esteem it at the true rate, and give all for it.

CLER. : Why what should a man do ?

TRUE. : Why, nothing ; or that which, when 'tis done, is as idle. Hearken after the next horse-race, or hunting-match, lay wagers, praise Puppy, or Peppercorn, White-foot, Franklin ; swear upon Whitemane's party ; speak aloud, that my lords may hear you ; visit my ladies at night, and be able to give them the character of every bowler or better on the green. These be the things wherein your fashionable men exercise themselves, and I for company.

CLER. : Nay, if I have thy authority, I'll not leave yet. Come, the other are considerations, when we come to have gray heads and weak hams, moist eyes and shrunk members. We'll think on 'em then ; and we'll pray and fast.

TRUE. : Ay, and destine only that time of age to goodness, which our want of ability will not let us employ in evil !

CLER. : Why, then 'tis time enough.

TRUE. : Yes ; as if a man should sleep all the term, and think to effect his business the last day. O, Clerimont, this time, because it is an incorporeal thing, and not subject to sense, we mock ourselves the fineliest out of it, with vanity and misery indeed ! not seeking an end of wretchedness, but only changing the matter still.

CLER. : Nay, thou'lt not leave now—

TRUE. : See but our common disease ! with what justice can we complain, that great men will not look upon us, nor be at leisure to give our affairs such dispatch as we expect, when we will never do it to ourselves ? nor hear, nor regard ourselves ?

CLER. : Foh ! thou hast read Plutarch's morals, now, or some such tedious fellow ; and it shews so vilely with thee ! 'fore God, 'twill spoil thy wit utterly. Talk to me of pins, and feathers, and ladies, and rushes, and such things : and leave this Stoicity alone, till thou mak'st sermons.

TRUE. : Well, sir ; if it will not take, I have learn'd to lose as little of my kindness as I can ; I'll do good to no man against his will, certainly. When were you at the college ?

CLER. : What college ?

TRUE. : As if you knew not !

CLER. : No, faith, I came but from court yesterday.

TRUE : Why, is it not arrived there yet, the news ? A new foundation, sir, here in the town, of ladies, that call themselves the collegiates, an order between courtiers and country-madams, that live from their husbands ; and give entertainment to all the wits, and braveries of the time, as they call them : cry down, or up, what they like or dislike in a brain or a fashion, with most masculine, or rather hermaphroditical authority ; and every day gain to their college some new probationer.

CLER. : Who is the president ?

TRUE. : The grave and youthful matron, the lady Haughty.

CLER. : A pox of her autumnal face, her pieced beauty ! there's no man can be admitted till she be ready, now-a-days, till she has painted, and perfumed, and wash'd, and scour'd, but the boy, here ; and him she wipes her oil'd lips upon, like a sponge. I have made a song (I pray thee hear it) on the subject.

[PAGE *sings*.

Still to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast ;
Still to be powder'd, still perfum'd ;
Lady, it is to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace ;
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free :
Such sweet neglect more taketh me,
Than all the adulteries of art ;
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

TRUE. : And I am clearly on the other side : I love a good dressing before any beauty o' the world. O, a woman is then like a delicate garden ; nor is there one kind of it ; she may vary every hour ; take often counsel of her glass, and choose the best. If she have good ears, shew them ; good hair, lay it out ; good legs, wear short clothes ; a good hand, discover it often : practise any art to mend breath, cleanse teeth, repair eye-brows ; paint, and profess it.

CLER. : How ! publicly ?

TRUE. : The doing of it, not the manner : that must be private. Many things that seem foul in the doing, do please done. A lady should, indeed, study her face, when we think she sleeps ; nor, when the doors are shut, should men be enquiring ; all is sacred within, then. Is it for us to see their perukes put on, their false teeth, their complexion, their eye-brows, their nails ? You see gilders will not work, but inclosed. They must not discover how little serves, with the help of art, to adorn a great deal. How long did the canvas hang afore Aldgate ? Were the people suffered to see the city's Love and Charity, while they were rude stone, before they were painted and burnish'd ? No ; no more should servants approach their mistresses, but when they are complete and finish'd.

CLER. : Well said, my Truewit.

TRUE. : And a wise lady will keep a guard always upon the place, that she may do things securely. I once followed a rude fellow into a chamber, where the poor madam, for haste, and troubled, snatch'd at her peruke to cover her baldness ; and put it on the wrong way.

CLER. : O prodigy !

TRUE. : And the unconscionable knave held her in compliment an hour with that reverst face, when I still look'd when she should talk from the t'other side.

CLER. : Why, thou shouldst have relieved her.

TRUE. : No, faith, I let her alone, as we'll let this argument, if you please, and pass to another. When saw you Dauphine Eugenie ?

CLER. : Not these three days. Shall we go to him this morning ? he is very melancholy, I hear.

TRUE. : Sick of the uncle, is he ? I met that stiff piece of formality, his uncle, yesterday, with a huge turban of night-caps on his head, buckled over his ears.

CLER. : O, that's his custom when he walks abroad. He can endure no noise, man.

TRUE. : So I have heard. But is the disease so ridiculous in him as it is made ? They say he has been upon divers treaties with the fish-wives and orange-women ; and articles propounded between them : marry, the chimney-sweepers will not be drawn in.

CLER. : No, nor the broom-men : they stand out stiffly. He cannot endure a costard-monger, he swoons if he hear one.

TRUE. : Methinks a smith should be ominous.

CLER. : Or any hammer-man. A brasier is not suffer'd to dwell in the parish, nor an armourer. He would have hang'd a pewterer's prentice once upon a Shrove-tuesday's riot, for being of that trade, when the rest were quit.

TRUE : A trumpet should fright him terribly, or the hautboys.

CLER. : Out of his senses. The waights of the city have a pension of him not to come near that ward. This youth practised on him one night like the bell-man ; and never left till he had brought him down to the door with a long sword ; and there left him flourishing with the air.

PAGE : Why, sir, he hath chosen a street to lie in so narrow at both ends, that it will receive no coaches, nor carts, nor any of these common noises : and therefore we that love him, devise to bring him in such as we may, now and then, for his exercise, to breathe him. He would grow resty else in his ease : his virtue would rust without action. I entreated a bearward, one day, to come down with the dogs of some four parishes that way, and I thank him he did ; and cried his games under master Morose's window : till he was sent crying away, with his head made a most bleeding spectacle to the multitude. And, another time, a fencer marching to his prize, had his drum most tragically run through, for taking that street in his way at my request.

TRUE. : A good wag ! How does he for the bells ?

CLER. : O, in the Queen's time, he was wont to go out of town every Saturday at ten o'clock, or on holy day eves. But now, by reason of the sickness, the perpetuity of ringing has made him devise a room, with double walls and treble ceilings ; the windows close shut and caulk'd : and there he lives by candle-light. He turn'd away a man, last week, for having a pair of new shoes that creak'd. And this fellow waits on him now in tennis-court socks, or slippers soled with wool : and they talk each to other in a trunk. See, who comes here

Enter Sir Dauphine Eugenie.

Daup. : How now ! what ail you, sirs ? dumb ?

True. : Struck into stone, almost, I am here, with tales o' thine uncle. There was never such a prodigy heard of.

Daup. : I would you would once lose this subject, my masters, for my sake. They are such as you are, that have brought me into that predicament I am with him.

True. : How is that ?

Daup. : Marry, that he will disinherit me ; no more. He thinks I and my company are authors of all the ridiculous Acts and Monuments are told of him.

True. : 'Slid, I would be the author of more to vex him ; that purpose deserves it : it gives thee law of plaguing him. I'll tell thee what I would do. I would make a false almanack, get it printed ; and then have him drawn out on a coronation day to the Tower-wharf, and kill him with the noise of the ordnance. Disinherit thee ! he cannot, man. Art not thou next of blood, and his sister's son ?

Daup. : Ay, but he will thrust me out of it, he vows, and marry.

True. : How ! that's a more portent. Can he endure no noise, and will venture on a wife ?

Cler. : Yes : why thou art a stranger, it seems, to his best trick, yet. He has employed a fellow this half year all over England to hearken him out a dumb woman ; be she of any form, or any quality, so she be able to bear children : her silence is dowry enough, he says.

True. : But I trust to God he has found none.

Cler. : No ; but he has heard of one that's lodged in the next street to him, who is exceedingly soft-spoken ; thrifty of her speech ; that spends but six words a day. And her he's about now, and shall have her.

True. : Is't possible ! who is his agent in the business ?

Cler. : Marry, a barber, one Cutbeard ; an honest fellow, one that tells Dauphine all here.

True. : Why you oppress me with wonder : a woman, and a barber, and love no noise !

Cler. : Yes, faith. The fellow trims him silently, and has not the knack with his sheers or his fingers : and that continence in a barber he thinks so eminent a virtue, as it has made him chief of his counsel.

True. : Is the barber to be seen, or the wench ?

Cler. : Yes, that they are.

True. : I prithee, Dauphine, let's go thither.

Daup. : I have some business now : I cannot, i'faith.

True. : You shall have no business shall make you neglect this, sir : we'll make her talk, believe it ; or, if she will not, we can give out at least so much as shall interrupt the treaty ; we will break it. Thou art bound in conscience, when he suspects thee without cause, to torment him.

Daup. : Not I, by any means. I'll give no suffrage to't. He shall never have that plea against me, that I opposed the least phant'sy of his. Let it lie upon my stars to be guilty, I'll be innocent.

True. : Yes, and be poor, and beg ; do, innocent : when some groom of his has got him an heir, or this barber, if he himself cannot. *Innocent !*—I prithee, Ned, where lies she ? let him be innocent still.

Cler. : Why, right over against the barber's ; in the house where sir John Daw lies.

True. : You do not mean to confound me !

Cler. : Why ?

TRUE. : Does he that would marry her know so much ?
CLER. : I cannot tell.
TRUE : 'Twere enough of imputation to her with him.
CLER. : Why ?
TRUE. : The only talking sir in the town ! Jack Daw ! and he teach her not to speak !—God be wi' you. I have some business too.
CLER. : Will you not go thither, then ?
TRUE. : Not with the danger to meet Daw, for mine ears.
CLER. : Why, I thought you two had been upon very good terms.
TRUE. : Yes, of keeping distance.
CLER. : They say, he is a very good scholar.
TRUE. : Ay, and he says it first. A pox on him, a fellow that pretends only to learning, buys titles, and nothing else of books in him !
CLER. : The world reports him to be very learned.
TRUE. : I am sorry the world should so conspire to belie him.
CLER. : Good faith, I have heard very good things come from him.
TRUE. : You may ; there's none so desperately ignorant to deny that : would they were his own ! God be wi' you, gentlemen. [*Exit hastily.*
CLER. : This is very abrupt !
DAUP. : Come, you are a strange open man, to tell every thing thus.
CLER. : Why, believe it, Dauphine, Truewit's a very honest fellow.
DAUP. : I think no other : but this frank nature of his is not for secrets.
CLER. : Nay, then, you are mistaken, Dauphine : I know where he has been well trusted, and discharged the trust very truly, and heartily.
DAUP. : I contend not, Ned ; but with the fewer a business is carried, it is ever the safer. Now we are alone, if you'll go thither, I am for you.
CLER. : When were you there ?
DAUP. : Last night : and such a Decameron of sport fallen out ! Boccace never thought of the like. Daw does nothing but court her ; and the wrong way. He would lie with her, and praises her modesty ; desires that she would talk and be free, and commends her silence in verses ; which he reads, and swears are the best that ever man made. Then rails at his fortunes, stamps, and mutines, why he is not made a counsellor, and call'd to affairs of state.
CLER. : I prithee let's go. I would fain partake this.—Some water, boy.
[*Exit* PAGE.
DAUP. : We are invited to dinner together, he and I, by one that came thither to him, sir La-Foole.
CLER. : O, that's a precious mannikin !
DAUP. : Do you know him ?
CLER. : Ay, and he will know you too, if e'er he saw you but once, though you should meet him at church in the midst of prayers. He is one of the braveries, though he be none of the wits. He will salute a judge upon the bench, and a bishop in the pulpit, a lawyer when he is pleading at the bar, and a lady when she is dancing in a masque, and put her out. He does give plays, and suppers, and invites his guests to them, aloud, out of his window, as they ride by in coaches. He has a lodging in the Strand for the purpose : or to watch when ladies are gone to the china-houses, or the Exchange, that he may meet them by chance, and give them presents, some two or three hundred pounds' worth of toys, to be laugh'd at. He is never without a spare banquet, or sweet-meats in his chamber, for their women to alight at, and come up to for a bait.
DAUP. : Excellent ! he was a fine youth last night : but now he is much finer ! what is his Christian name ? I have forgot.

Re-enter PAGE.

CLER. : Sir Amorous La-Foole.
PAGE : The gentleman is here below that owns that name.
CLER. : 'Heart, he's come to invite me to dinner, I hold my life.
DAUP. : Like enough : prithee, let's have him up.
CLER. : Boy, marshal him.
PAGE : With a truncheon, sir ?
CLER. : Away, I beseech you. (*Exit* PAGE.)—I'll make him tell us his pedigree now ; and what meat he has to dinner ; and who are his guests ; and the whole course of his fortunes ; with a breath.

Enter SIR AMOROUS LA-FOOLE.

LA-F. : 'Save, dear sir Dauphine ! honoured master Clerimont !
CLER. : Sir Amorous ! you have very much honested my lodging with your presence.
LA-F. : Good faith, it is a fine lodging : almost as delicate a lodging as mine.
CLER. : Not so, sir.
LA-F. : Excuse me, sir, if it were in the Strand, I assure you. I am come, master Clerimont, to entreat you to wait upon two or three ladies, to dinner, to-day.
CLER. : How, sir ! wait upon them ? did you ever see me carry dishes ?
LA-F. : No, sir, dispense with me ; I meant, to bear them company.
CLER. : O, that I will, sir : the doubtfulness of your phrase, believe it, sir, would breed you a quarrel once an hour, with the terrible boys, if you should but keep them fellowship a day.
LA-F. : It should be extremely against my will, sir, if I contested with any man.
CLER. : I believe it, sir : Where hold you your feast ?
LA-F. : At Tom Otter's, sir.
DAUP. : Tom Otter ! what's he ?
LA-F. : Captain Otter, sir ; he is a kind of gamester, but he has had command both by sea and by land.
DAUP. : O, then he is *animal amphibium* ?
LA-F. : Ay, sir : his wife was the rich china-woman, that the courtiers visited so often ; that gave the rare entertainment. She commands all at home.
CLER. : Then she is captain Otter.
LA-F. : You say very well, sir ; she is my kinswoman, a La-Foole by the mother-side, and will invite any great ladies for my sake.
DAUP. : Not of the La-Fooles of Essex ?
LA-F. : No, sir, the La-Fooles of London.
CLER. : Now, he's in. [*Aside.*
LA-F. : They all come out of our house, the La-Fooles of the north, the La-Fooles of the west, the La-Fooles of the east and south—we are as ancient a family as any is in Europe—but I myself am descended lineally of the French La-Fooles—and, we do bear for our coat yellow, or *or*, checker'd *azure*, and *gules*, and some three or four colours more, which is a very noted coat, and has, sometimes, been solemnly worn by divers nobility of our house—but let that go, antiquity is not respected now.—I had a brace of fat does sent me, gentlemen, and half a dozen of pheasants, a dozen or two of godwits, and some other fowl, which I would have eaten, while they are good, and in good company :—there will be a great lady or two, my lady Haughty, my lady Centaure, mistress Dol Mavis—and they come o' purpose to see the silent gentlewoman, mistress Epicœne, that honest sir John Daw has promised to bring thither—and then, mistress Trusty, my lady's woman, will be there too, and this honourable knight, sir Dauphine, with yourself, master

Clerimont—and we'll be very merry, and have fidlers, and dance.—I have been a mad wag in my time, and have spent some crowns since I was a page in court, to my lord Lofty, and after, my lady's gentleman-usher, who got me knighted in Ireland, since it pleased my elder brother to die.—I had as fair a gold jerkin on that day, as any worn in the island voyage, or at Cadiz, none dispraised ; and I came over in it hither, shew'd myself to my friends in court, and after went down to my tenants in the country, and surveyed my lands, let new leases, took their money, spent it in the eye o' the land here, upon ladies :—and now I can take up at my pleasure.

DAUP. : Can you take up ladies, sir ?

CLER. : O, let him breathe, he has not recover'd.

DAUP. : Would I were your half in that commodity !

LA-F. : No, sir, excuse me : I meant money, which can take up any thing. I have another guest or two, to invite, and say as much to, gentlemen. I'll take my leave abruptly, in hope you will not fail——Your servant. [*Exit.*

DAUP. : We will not fail you, sir precious La-Foole ; but she shall, that your ladies come to see, if I have credit afore sir Daw.

CLER. : Did you ever hear such a wind-sucker, as this ?

DAUP. : Or such a rook as the other, that will betray his mistress to be seen ! Come, 'tis time we prevented it.

CLER. : Go. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*A Room in* MOROSE'S *House.*

Enter MOROSE, *with a tube in his hand, followed by* MUTE.

MOR. : Cannot I, yet, find out a more compendious method, than by this trunk, to save my servants the labour of speech, and mine ears the discords of sounds ? Let me see : all discourses but my own afflict me ; they seem harsh, impertinent, and irksome. Is it not possible, that thou shouldst answer me by signs, and I apprehend thee, fellow ? Speak not, though I question you. You have taken the ring off from the street door, as I bade you ? answer me not by speech, but by silence ; unless it be otherwise (MUTE *makes a leg.*)—very good. And you have fastened on a thick quilt, or flock-bed, on the outside of the door ; that if they knock with their daggers, or with brick-bats, they can make no noise ?—But with your leg, your answer, unless it be otherwise. (*makes a leg.*)—Very good. This is not only fit modesty in a servant, but good state and discretion in a master. And you have been with Cutbeard the barber, to have him come to me ? (*makes a leg.*)—Good. And, he will come presently? Answer me not but with your leg, unless it be otherwise ; if it be otherwise, shake your head, or shrug. (*makes a leg.*)—So ! Your Italian and Spaniard are wise in these : and it is a frugal and comely gravity. How long will it be ere Cutbeard come ? Stay ; if an hour, hold up your whole hand, if half an hour, two fingers ; if a quarter, one ; (*holds up a finger bent.*)—Good ; half a quarter ? 'tis well. And have you given him a key, to come in without knocking ? (*makes a leg.*)—good. And is the lock oil'd, and the hinges, to-day ? (*makes a leg.*)—good. And the quilting of the stairs no where worn out and bare ? (*makes a leg.*)—Very good. I see, by much doctrine, and impulsion, it may be effected ; stand by. The Turk, in this divine discipline, is admirable, exceeding all the potentates of the earth ; still waited on by mutes ; and all his commands so executed ; yea, even in the war, as I have heard, and in his marches, most of his charges and directions given by signs, and with silence : an exquisite art ! and I am heartily ashamed, and angry oftentimes, that the princes of Christendom should suffer a barbarian to transcend them in so high a point of

felicity. I will practise it hereafter. (*A horn winded within.*)—How now ? oh ! oh ! what villain, what prodigy of mankind is that ? look. (*Exit* MUTE.)—(*Horn again.*)—Oh, cut his throat, cut his throat ! what murderer, hell-hound, devil can this be ?

Re-enter MUTE.

MUTE : It is a post from the court—

MOR. : Out, rogue ! and must thou blow thy horn too ?

MUTE : Alas, it is a post from the court, sir, that says, he must speak with you, pain of death—

MOR. : Pain of thy life, be silent !

Enter TRUEWIT *with a post-horn, and a halter in his hand.*

TRUE. : By your leave, sir ;—I am a stranger here :—Is your name master Morose ? is your name master Morose ? Fishes ! Phythagoreans all ! This is strange. What say you, sir ? nothing ! Has Harpocrates been here with his club, among you ? Well, sir, I will believe you to be the man at this time : I will venture upon you, sir. Your friends at court commend them to you, sir—

MOR. : O men ! O manners ! was there ever such an impudence ?

TRUE. : And are extremely solicitous for you, sir.

MOR. : Whose knave are you ?

TRUE. : Mine own knave, and your compeer, sir.

MOR. : Fetch me my sword—

TRUE. : You shall taste the one half of my dagger, if you do, groom ; and you the other, if you stir, sir : Be patient, I charge you, in the king's name, and hear me without insurrection. They say, you are to marry : to marry ! do you mark, sir ?

MOR. : How then, rude companion !

TRUE. : Marry, your friends do wonder, sir, the Thames being so near, wherein you may drown, so handsomely ; or London-bridge, at a low fall, with a fine leap, to hurry you down the stream ; or, such a delicate steeple in the town, as Bow, to vault from ; or, a braver height, as Paul's : Or if you affected to do it nearer home, and a shorter way, an excellent garret-window into the street ; or, a beam in the said garret, with this halter (*shews him the halter.*)—which they have sent, and desire, that you would sooner commit your grave head to this knot, than to the wedlock noose ; or, take a little sublimate, and go out of the world like a rat ; or a fly, as one said, with a straw in your arse : any way, rather than follow this goblin Matrimony. Alas, sir, do you ever think to find a chaste wife in these times ? now ? when there are so many masques, plays, Puritan preachings, mad folks, and other strange sights to be seen daily, private and public ? If you had lived in king Etheldred's time, sir, or Edward the Confessor, you might, perhaps, have found one in some cold country hamlet, then, a dull frosty wench, would have been contented with one man : now, they will as soon be pleased with one leg, or one eye. I'll tell you, sir, the monstrous hazards you shall run with a wife.

MOR. : Good sir, have I ever cozen'd any friends of yours of their land ? bought their possessions ? taken forfeit of their mortgage ? begg'd a reversion from them ? bastarded their issue ? What have I done, that may deserve this ?

TRUE. : Nothing, sir, that I know, but your itch of marriage.

MOR. : Why, if I had made an assassinate upon your father, vitiated your mother, ravished your sisters—

TRUE. : I would kill you, sir, I would kill you, if you had.

MOR. : Why, you do more in this, sir : it were a vengeance centuple, for all facinorous acts that could be named, to do that you do.

TRUE. : Alas, sir, I am but a messenger ; I but tell you, what you must hear. It seems your friends are careful after your soul's health, sir, and would have you know the danger : (but you may do your pleasure for all them, I persuade not, sir.) If, after you are married, your wife do run away with a vaulter, or the Frenchman that walks upon ropes, or him that dances the jig, or a fencer for his skill at his weapon ; why it is not their fault, they have discharged their consciences ; when you know what may happen. Nay, suffer valiantly, sir, for I must tell you all the perils that you are obnoxious to. If she be fair, young and vegetous, no sweetmeats ever drew more flies ; all the yellow doublets and great roses in the town will be there. If foul and crooked, she'll be with them, and buy those doublets and roses, sir. If rich, and that you marry her dowry, not her, she'll reign in your house as imperious as a widow. If noble, all her kindred will be your tyrants. If fruitful, as proud as May, and humorous as April ; she must have her doctors, her midwives, her nurses, her longings every hour ; though it be for the dearest morsel of man. If learned, there was never such a parrot ; all your patrimony will be too little for the guests that must be invited to hear her speak Latin and Greek ; and you must lie with her in those languages too, if you will please her. If precise, you must feast all the silenced brethren, once in three days ; salute the sisters ; entertain the whole family, or wood of them ; and hear long-winded exercises, singings and catechisings, which you are not given to, and yet must give for ; to please the zealous matron your wife, who for the holy cause, will cozen you over and above. You begin to sweat, sir ! but this is not half, i'faith : you may do your pleasure, notwithstanding, as I said before : I come not to persuade you. (MUTE *is stealing away.*)—Upon my faith, master serving-man, if you do stir, I will beat you.

MOR. : O, what is my sin ! what is my sin !

TRUE. : Then, if you love your wife, or rather dote on her, sir ; O, how she'll torture you, and take pleasure in your torments ! you shall lie with her but when she lists ; she will not hurt her beauty, her complexion ; or it must be for that jewel, or that pearl, when she does : every half hour's pleasure must be bought anew, and with the same pain and charge you woo'd her at first. Then you must keep what servants she please ; what company she will ; that friend must not visit you without her license ; and him she loves most, she will seem to hate eagerliest, to decline your jealousy ; or, feign to be jealous of you first ; and for that cause go live with her she-friend, or cousin at the college, that can instruct her in all the mysteries of writing letters, corrupting servants, taming spies ; where she must have that rich gown for such a great day ; a new one for the next ; a richer for the third ; be served in silver ; have the chamber fill'd with a succession of grooms, footmen, ushers, and other messengers ; besides embroiderers, jewellers, tire-women, sempsters, feather-men, perfumers ; while she feels not how the land drops away, nor the acres melt ; nor foresees the change, when the mercer has your woods for her velvets ; never weighs what her pride costs, sir ; so she may kiss a page, or a smooth chin, that has the despair of a beard : be a stateswoman, know all the news, what was done at Salisbury, what at the Bath, what at court, what in progress ; or, so she may censure poets, and authors, and styles, and compare them ; Daniel with Spenser, Jonson with the t'other youth, and so forth : or be thought cunning in controversies, or the very knots of divinity ; and have often in her mouth the state of the question ; and then skip to the mathematics, and demonstration : and answer in religion to one, in state to another, in bawdry to a third.

MOR. : O, O !

TRUE. : All this is very true, sir. And then her going in disguise to that

conjurer, and this cunning woman: where the first question is, how soon you shall die? next, if her present servant love her? next, if she shall have a new servant? and how many? which of her family would make the best bawd, male or female? what precedence she shall have by her next match? and sets down the answers, and believes them above the scriptures. Nay, perhaps she'll study the art.

OR.: Gentle sir, have you done? have you had your pleasure of me? I'll think of these things.

RUE.: Yes, sir: and then comes reeking home of vapour and sweat, with going a foot, and lies in a month of a new face, all oil and birdlime; and rises in asses' milk, and is cleansed with a new fucus: God be wi' you, sir. One thing more, which I had almost forgot. This too, with whom you are to marry, may have made a conveyance of her virginity afore hand, as your wise widows do of their states, before they marry, in trust to some friend, sir: Who can tell? Or if she have not done it yet, she may do, upon the wedding-day, or the night before, and antedate you cuckold. The like has been heard of in nature. 'Tis no devised, impossible thing, sir. God be wi' you: I'll be bold to leave this rope with you, sir, for a remembrance.—Farewell, Mute! [*Exit.*

OR.: Come, have me to my chamber: but first shut the door. (TRUEWIT *winds the horn without.*) O, shut the door, shut the door! is he come again?

Enter CUTBEARD.

UT.: 'Tis I, sir, your barber.

OR.: O, Cutbeard, Cutbeard, Cutbeard! here has been a cut-throat with me: help me in to my bed, and give me physic with thy counsel. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* SIR JOHN DAW'S *House.*

Enter DAW, CLERIMONT, DAUPHINE, *and* EPICŒNE.

AW: Nay, an she will, let her refuse at her own charges: 'tis nothing to me, gentlemen: but she will not be invited to the like feasts or guests every day.

LER.: O, by no means, she may not refuse—to stay at home, if you love your reputation: 'Slight, you are invited thither o' purpose to be seen, and laughed at by the lady of the college, and her shadows. This trumpeter hath proclaim'd you. [*Aside to* EPI.

AUP.: You shall not go; let him be laugh'd at in your stead, for not bringing you: and put him to his extemporal faculty of fooling and talking loud, to satisfy the company. [*Aside to* EPI.

LER.: He will suspect us; talk aloud.—'Pray, mistress Epicœne, let's see your verses; we have sir John Daw's leave; do not conceal your servant's merit, and your own glories.

PI.: They'll prove my servant's glories, if you have his leave so soon.

AUP.: His vain-glories, lady!

AW: Shew them, shew them, mistress; I dare own them.

PI.: Judge you, what glories.

AW: Nay, I'll read them myself too: an author must recite his own works. It is a madrigal of Modesty.

Modest and fair, for fair and good are near
Neighbours, howe'er.—

AUP.: Very good.

LER.: Ay, is't not?

AW: *No noble virtue ever was alone,*
But two in one.

DAUP. : Excellent !
CLER. : That again, I pray, sir John.
DAUP. : It has something in't like rare wit and sense.
CLER. : Peace.
DAW : *No noble virtue ever was alone,*
But two in one.
Then, when I praise sweet modesty, I praise
Bright beauty's rays :
And having praised both beauty and modesty,
I have praised thee.
DAUP. : Admirable !
CLER. : How it chimes, and cries tink in the close, divinely !
DAUP. : Ay, 'tis Seneca.
CLER. : No, I think 'tis Plutarch.
DAW : The dor on Plutarch and Seneca ! I hate it : they are mine own imaginations, by that light. I wonder those fellows have such credit with gentlemen
CLER. : They are very grave authors.
DAW : Grave asses ! mere essayists : a few loose sentences, and that's all. A man would talk so, his whole age : I do utter as good things every hour, if they were collected and observed, as either of them.
DAUP. : Indeed, sir John !
CLER. : He must needs ; living among the wits and braveries too.
DAUP. : Ay, and being president of them, as he is.
DAW : There's Aristotle, a mere common-place fellow ; Plato, a discourser ; Thucydides and Livy, tedious and dry ; Tacitus, an entire knot ; sometimes worth the untying, very seldom.
CLER. : What do you think of the poets, sir John ?
DAW : Not worthy to be named for authors. Homer, an old tedious, prolix ass, talks of curriers, and chines of beef : Virgil of dunging of land, and bees ; Horace, of I know not what.
CLER. : I think so.
DAW : And so Pindarus, Lycophron, Anacreon, Catullus, Seneca the tragedian, Lucan, Propertius, Tibullus, Martial, Juvenal, Ausonius, Statius, Politian, Valerius Flaccus, and the rest—
CLER. : What a sack full of their names he has got !
DAUP. : And how he pours them out ! Politian with Valerius Flaccus !
CLER. : Was not the character right of him ?
DAUP. : As could be made, i'faith.
DAW : And Persius, a crabbed coxcomb, not to be endured.
DAUP. : Why, whom do you account for authors, sir John Daw ?
DAW : Syntagma juris civilis ; Corpus juris civilis ; Corpus juris canonici ; the king of Spain's bible—
DAUP. : Is the King of Spain's bible an author ?
CLER. : Yes, and Syntagma.
DAUP. : What was that Syntagma, sir ?
DAW : A civil lawyer, a Spaniard.
DAUP. : Sure, Corpus was a Dutchman.
CLER. : Ay, both the Corpuses, I knew 'em : they were very corpulent authors.
DAW : And then there's Vatablus, Pomponatius, Symancha : the other are not to be received, within the thought of a scholar.
DAUP. : 'Fore God, you have a simple learned servant, lady,—in titles. [*Aside.*
CLER. : I wonder that he is not called to the helm, and made a counsellor.
DAUP. : He is one extraordinary.

LER. : Nay, but in ordinary : to say truth, the state wants such.
AUP. : Why that will follow.
LER. : I muse a mistress can be so silent to the dotes of such a servant.
AW : 'Tis her virtue, sir. I have written somewhat of her silence too.
AUP. : In verse, sir John ?
LER. : What else ?
AUP. : Why, how can you justify your own being of a poet, that so slight all the old poets ?
AW : Why, every man that writes in verse is not a poet ; you have of the wits that write verses, and yet are no poets : they are poets that live by it, the poor fellows that live by it.
AUP. : Why, would not you live by your verses, sir John ?
LER. : No, 'twere pity he should. A knight live by his verses ! he did not make them to that end, I hope.
AUP. : And yet the noble Sidney lives by his, and the noble family not ashamed.
LER. : Ay, he profest himself ; but sir John Daw has more caution : he'll not hinder his own rising in the state so much. Do you think he will ? Your verses, good sir John, and no poems.
AW : *Silence in woman, is like speech in man ;*
Deny't who can.
AUP. : Not I, believe it : your reason, sir.
AW : *Nor is't a tale,*
That female vice should be a virtue male,
Or masculine vice a female virtue be :
You shall it see
Prov'd with increase ;
I know to speak, and she to hold her peace.
Do you conceive me, gentlemen ?
AUP. : No, faith ; how mean you *with increase*, sir John ?
AW : Why, with increase is, when I court her for the common cause of mankind, and she says nothing, but *consentire videtur ;* and in time is *gravida.*
AUP. : Then this is a ballad of procreation ?
LER. : A madrigal of procreation ; you mistake.
DI. : 'Pray give me my verses again, servant.
AW : If you'll ask them aloud, you shall. [*Walks aside with the papers.*

Enter TRUEWIT *with his horn.*

LER. : See, here's Truewit again !—Where hast thou been, in the name of madness, thus accoutred with thy horn ?
RUE. : Where the sound of it might have pierced your sense with gladness, had you been in ear-reach of it. Dauphine, fall down and worship me ; I have forbid the bans, lad : I have been with thy virtuous uncle, and have broke the match.
AUP. : You have not, I hope.
RUE. : Yes, faith ; and thou shouldst hope otherwise, I should repent me : this horn got me entrance ; kiss it. I had no other way to get in, but by feigning to be a post ; but when I got in once, I proved none, but rather the contrary, turn'd him into a post, or a stone, or what is stiffer, with thundering into him the incommodities of a wife, and the miseries of marriage. If ever Gorgon were seen in the shape of a woman, he hath seen her in my description : I have put him off o' that scent for ever.—Why do you not applaud and adore me, sirs ? why stand you mute ? are you stupid ? You are not worthy of the benefit.

DAUP. : Did not I tell you ? Mischief !—
CLER. : I would you had placed this benefit somewhere else.
TRUE. : Why so ?
CLER. : 'Slight, you have done the most inconsiderate, rash, weak thing, that ever man did to his friend.
DAUP. : Friend ! if the most malicious enemy I have, had studied to inflict an injury upon me, it could not be a greater.
TRUE. : Wherein for God's sake ? Gentlemen, come to yourselves again.
DAUP. : But I presaged thus much afore to you.
CLER. : Would my lips had been solder'd when I spake on't ! Slight, what moved you to be thus impertinent ?
TRUE. : My masters, do not put on this strange face to pay my courtesy ; off with this vizor. Have good turns done you, and thank 'em this way !
DAUP. : 'Fore heaven, you have undone me. That which I have plotted for, and been naturing now these four months, you have blasted in a minute : Now I am lost, I may speak. This gentlewoman was lodged here by me o' purpose, and, to be put upon my uncle, hath profest this obstinate silence for my sake ; being my entire friend, and one that for the requital of such a fortune as to marry him, would have made me very ample conditions ; where now, all my hopes are utterly miscarried by this unlucky accident.
CLER. : Thus 'tis when a man will be ignorantly officious, do services, and not know his why ; I wonder what courteous itch possest you. You never did absurder part in your life, nor a greater trespass to friendship or humanity.
DAUP. : Faith, you may forgive it best ; 'twas your cause principally.
CLER. : I know it ; would it had not.

Enter CUTBEARD.

DAUP. : How now, Cutbeard ! what news ?
CUT. : The best, the happiest that ever was, sir. There has been a mad gentleman with your uncle this morning, (*seeing* TRUEWIT.)—I think this be the gentleman—that has almost talk'd him out of his wits, with threatening him from marriage—
DAUP. : On, I prithee.
CUT. : And your uncle, sir, he thinks 'twas done by your procurement ; therefore he will see the party you wot of presently ; and if he like her, he says, and that she be so inclining to dumb as I have told him, he swears he will marry her to-day, instantly, and not defer it a minute longer.
DAUP. : Excellent ! Beyond our expectation !
TRUE. : Beyond our expectation ! By this light, I knew it would be thus.
DAUP. : Nay, sweet Truewit, forgive me.
TRUE. : No, I was *ignorantly officious, impertinent ;* this was the *absurd, weak part.*
CLER. : Wilt thou ascribe that to merit now, was mere fortune !
TRUE. : Fortune ! mere providence. Fortune had not a finger in't. I saw it must necessarily in nature fall out so : my genius is never false to me in these things. Show me how it could be otherwise.
DAUP. : Nay, gentlemen, contend not ; 'tis well now.
TRUE. : Alas, I let him go on with *inconsiderate*, and *rash*, and what he pleased.
CLER. : Away, thou strange justifier of thyself, to be wiser than thou wert, by the event !
TRUE : Event ! by this light, thou shalt never persuade me, but I foresaw it as well as the stars themselves.
DAUP. : Nay, gentlemen, 'tis well now. Do you two entertain sir John Dav with discourse, while I send her away with instructions.
TRUE. : I'll be acquainted with her first, by your favour.

LER. : Master Truewit, lady, a friend of ours.
RUE. : I am sorry I have not known you sooner, lady, to celebrate this rare virtue of your silence. [*Exeunt* DAUP., EPI., *and* CUTBEARD.
LER. : Faith, an you had come sooner, you should have seen and heard her well celebrated in sir John Daw's madrigals.
RUE. (*advances to* DAW) : Jack Daw, God save you ! when saw you La-Foole ?
AW : Not since last night, Master Truewit.
RUE. : That's a miracle ! I thought you two had been inseparable.
AW : He's gone to invite his guests.
RUE. : 'Odso ! 'tis true ! What a false memory have I towards that man ! I am one : I met him even now, upon that he calls his delicate fine black horse, rid into foam, with posting from place to place, and person to person, to give them the cue—
LER. : Lest they should forget ?
RUE. : Yes : There was never poor captain took more pains at a muster to shew men, than he, at this meal, to shew friends.
AW : It is his quarter-feast, sir.
LER. : What ! do you say so, sir John ?
RUE. : Nay, Jack Daw will not be out, at the best friends he has, to the talent of his wit : Where's his mistress, to hear and applaud him ? is she gone ?
AW : Is mistress Epicœne gone ?
LER. : Gone afore, with sir Dauphine, I warrant, to the place.
RUE. : Gone afore ! that were a manifest injury, a disgrace and a half ; to refuse him at such a festival-time as this, being a bravery, and a wit too !
LER. : Tut, he'll swallow it like cream : he's better read in Jure civili, than to esteem any thing a disgrace, is offer'd him from a mistress.
AW : Nay, let her e'en go ; she shall sit alone, and be dumb in her chamber a week together, for John Daw, I warrant her. Does she refuse me ?
LER. : No, sir, do not take it so to heart ; she does not refuse you, but a little neglects you. Good faith, Truewit, you were to blame, to put it into his head, that she does refuse him.
RUE. : Sir, she does refuse him palpably, however you mince it. An I were as he, I would swear to speak ne'er a word to her to-day for't.
AW : By this light, no more I will not.
RUE. : Nor to any body else, sir.
AW : Nay, I will not say so, gentlemen.
LER. : It had been an excellent happy condition for the company, if you could have drawn him to it. [*Aside.*
AW : I'll be very melancholy, i'faith.
LER. As a dog, if I were as you, sir John.
RUE. : Or a snail, or a hog-louse : I would roll myself up for this day ; in troth, they should not unwind me.
AW : By this pick-tooth, so I will.
LER. : 'Tis well done : He begins already to be angry with his teeth.
AW : Will you go, gentlemen ?
LER. : Nay, you must walk alone, if you be right melancholy, sir John.
RUE. : Yes, sir, we'll dog you, we'll follow you afar off. [*Exit* DAW.
LER. : Was there ever such a two yards of knighthood measured out by time, to be sold to laughter ?
RUE. : A mere talking mole, hang him ! no mushroom was ever so fresh. A fellow so utterly nothing, as he knows not what he would be.
LER. : Let's follow him : but first let's go to Dauphine, he's hovering about the house to hear what news.
RUE. : Content. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in* MOROSE'S *House.*

Enter MOROSE *and* MUTE, *followed by* CUTBEARD *with* EPICŒNE.

MOR. : Welcome, Cutbeard ! draw near with your fair charge : and in her ear softly entreat her to unmask. (EPI. *takes off her mask.*)—So ! Is the door shut ? (MUTE *makes a leg.*)—Enough. Now, Cutbeard, with the same discipline I use to my family, I will question you. As I conceive, Cutbeard, this gentlewoman is she you have provided, and brought, in hope she will fit me in the place and person of a wife ? Answer me not but with your leg, unless it be otherwise : (CUT. *makes a leg.*)—Very well done, Cutbeard. I conceive, besides, Cutbeard, you have been pre-acquainted with her birth, education, and qualities, or else you would not prefer her to my acceptance, in the weighty consequence of marriage (*makes a leg.*)—This I conceive, Cutbeard. Answer me not but with your leg, unless it be otherwise (*bows again.*)—Very well done, Cutbeard. Give aside now a little, and leave me to examine her condition, and aptitude to my affection (*goes about her and views her.*)—She is exceeding fair, and of a special good favour ; a sweet composition or harmony of limbs ; her temper of beauty has the true height of my blood. The knave hath exceedingly well fitted me without : I will now try her within.—Come near, fair gentlewoman ; let not my behaviour seem rude, though unto you, being rare, it may haply appear strange. (EPICŒNE *curtsies.*) Nay lady you may speak, though Cutbeard and my man might not ; for of all sounds, only the sweet voice of a fair lady has the just length of mine ears. I beseech you, say, lady ; out of the first fire of meeting eyes, they say, love is stricken : do you feel any such motion suddenly shot into you, from any part you see in me ? ha, lady ? (EPI. *curtsies.*)—Alas, lady, these answers by silent curtsies from you are too courtless and simple. I have ever had my breeding in court ; and she that shall be my wife, must be accomplished with courtly and audacious ornaments. Can you speak, lady ?

EPI. (*softly*) : Judge you, forsooth.

MOR. : What say you, lady ? Speak out, I beseech you.

EPI. : Judge you, forsooth.

MOR. : On my judgment, a divine softness ! But can you naturally, lady, as I enjoin these by doctrine and industry, refer yourself to the search of my judgment, and, not taking pleasure in your tongue, which is a woman's chiefest pleasure, think it plausible to answer me by silent gestures, so long as my speeches jump right with what you conceive ? (EPI. *curtsies.*)—Excellent ! divine ! if it were possible she should hold out thus !—Peace, Cutbeard, thou art made for ever, as thou hast made me, if this felicity have lasting : but I will try her further. Dear lady, I am courtly, I tell you, and I must have mine ears banqueted with pleasant and witty conferences, pretty girls, scoffs, and dalliance in her that I mean to choose for my bed-phere. The ladies in court think it a most desperate impair to their quickness of wit, and good carriage, if they cannot give occasion for a man to court 'em ; and when an amorous discourse is set on foot, minister as good matter to continue it, as himself : And do you alone so much differ from all them, that what they, with so much circumstance, affect and toil for, to seem learn'd, to seem judicious, to seem sharp and conceited, you can bury in yourself with silence, and rather trust your graces to the fair conscience of virtue, than to the world's or your own proclamation ?

EPI. (*softly*) : I should be sorry else.

MOR. : What say you, lady ? good lady, speak out.

EPI. : I should be sorry else.

MOR. : That sorrow doth fill me with gladness. O Morose, thou art happy

above mankind ! pray that thou mayest contain thyself. I will only put her to it once more, and it shall be with the utmost touch and test of their sex. But hear me, fair lady ; I do also love to see her whom I shall choose for my heifer, to be the first and principal in all fashions, precede all the dames at court by a fortnight, have council of tailors, lineners, lace-women, embroiderers : and sit with them sometimes twice a day upon French intelligences, and then come forth varied like nature, or oftener than she, and better by the help of art, her emulous servant. This do I affect : and how will you be able, lady, with this frugality of speech, to give the manifold but necessary instructions, for that bodice, these sleeves, those skirts, this cut, that stitch, this embroidery, that lace, this wire, those knots, that ruff, those roses, this girdle, that fan, the t'other scarf, these gloves ? Ha ! what say you, lady ?

DI. (*softly*) : I'll leave it to you, sir.

DOR. : How, lady ? pray you rise a note.

DI. : I leave it to wisdom and you sir.

DOR. : Admirable creature ! I will trouble you no more : I will not sin against so sweet a simplicity. Let me now be bold to print on those divine lips the seal of being mine.—Cutbeard, I give thee the lease of thy house free ; thank me not but with thy leg. (CUTBEARD *shakes his head.*)—I know what thou wouldst say, she's poor, and her friends deceased. She has brought a wealthy dowry in her silence, Cutbeard ; and in respect of her poverty, Cutbeard, I shall have her more loving and obedient, Cutbeard. Go thy ways, and get me a minister presently, with a soft low voice, to marry us ; and pray him he will not be impertinent, but brief as he can ; away : softly, Cutbeard. (*Exit* CUT.)—Sirrah, conduct your mistress into the dining-room, your now mistress. (*Exit* MUTE, *followed by* EPI.)—O my felicity ! how shall I be revenged on mine insolent kinsman, and his plots to fright me from marrying ! This night I will get an heir, and thrust him out of my blood, like a stranger. He would be knighted, forsooth, and thought by that means to reign over me ; his title must do it : No, kinsman, I will now make you bring me the tenth lord's and the sixteenth lady's letter, kinsman ; and it shall do you no good, kinsman. Your knighthood itself shall come on its knees, and it shall be rejected ; it shall be sued for its fees to execution, and not be redeem'd ; it shall cheat at the twelve-penny ordinary, it knighthood, for its diet, all the term-time, and tell tales for it in the vacation to the hostess ; or it knighthood shall do worse, take sanctuary in Cole-harbour, and fast. It shall fright all it friends with borrowing letters ; and when one of the fourscore hath brought it knighthood ten shillings, it knighthood shall go to the Cranes, or the Bear at the Bridge-foot, and be drunk in fear ; it shall not have money to discharge one tavern-reckoning, to invite the old creditors to forbear it knighthood, or the new, that should be, to trust it knighthood. It shall be the tenth name in the bond to take up the commodity of pipkins and stone-jugs : and the part thereof shall not furnish it knighthood forth for the attempting of a baker's widow, a brown baker's widow. It shall give it knighthood's name for a stallion, to all gamesome citizens' wives, and be refused, when the master of a dancing-school, or how do you call him, the worst reveller in the town is taken : it shall want clothes, and by reason of that, wit, to fool to lawyers. It shall not have hope to repair itself by Constantinople, Ireland, or Virginia ; but the best and last fortune to it knighthood shall be to make Dol Tearsheet, or Kate Common a lady, and so it knighthood may eat. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*A Lane, near* MOROSE'S *House.*

Enter TRUEWIT, DAUPHINE, *and* CLERIMONT.

TRUE. : Are you sure he is not gone by ?

DAUP. : No, I staid in the shop ever since.
CLER. : But he may take the other end of the lane.
DAUP. : No, I told him I would be here at this end : I appointed him hither.
TRUE. : What a barbarian it is to stay then !
DAUP. : Yonder he comes.
CLER. : And his charge left behind him, which is a very good sign, Dauphine.

Enter CUTBEARD.

DAUP. : How now, Cutbeard ! succeeds it, or no ?

CUT. : Past imagination, sir, *omnia secunda ;* you could not have pray'd to have had it so well. *Saltat senex*, as it is in the proverb ; he does triumph in his felicity, admires the party ! he has given me the lease of my house too ! and I am now going for a silent minister to marry them, and away.

TRUE. : 'Slight ! get one of the silenced ministers ; a zealous brother would torment him purely.

CUT. : *Cum privilegio*, sir.

DAUP. : O, by no means ; let's do nothing to hinder it now : when 'tis done and finished, I am for you, for any device of vexation.

CUT. : And that shall be within this half hour, upon my dexterity, gentlemen. Contrive what you can in the mean time, *bonis avibus*. [*Exit.*

CLER. : How the slave doth Latin it !

TRUE. : It would be made a jest to posterity, sirs, this day's mirth, if ye will.

CLER. : Beshrew his heart that will not, I pronounce.

DAUP. : And for my part. What is it ?

TRUE. : To translate all La-Foole's company, and his feast thither, to-day, to celebrate this bride-ale.

DAUP. : Ay, marry ; but how will't be done ?

TRUE. : I'll undertake the directing of all the lady-guests thither, and then the meat must follow.

CLER. : For God's sake, let's effect it ; it will be an excellent comedy of affliction, so many several noises.

DAUP. : But are they not at the other place, already, think you ?

TRUE. : I'll warrant you for the college-honours : one of their faces has not the priming colour laid on yet, nor the other her smock sleek'd.

CLER. : O, but they'll rise earlier than ordinary to a feast.

TRUE. : Best go see, and assure ourselves.

CLER. : Who knows the house ?

TRUE. : I'll lead you : Were you never there yet ?

DAUP. : Not I.

CLER. : Nor I.

TRUE. : Where have you lived then ? not know Tom Otter !

CLER. : No : for God's sake, what is he ?

TRUE. : An excellent animal, equal with your Daw or La-Foole, if not transcendant ; and does Latin it as much as your barber : He is his wife's subject ; he calls her princess, and at such times as these follows her up and down the house like a page, with his hat off, partly for heat, partly for reverence. At this instant he is marshalling of his bull, bear, and horse.

DAUP. : What be those, in the name of Sphynx ?

TRUE. : Why, sir, he has been a great man at the Bear-garden in his time ; and from that subtle sport has ta'en the witty denomination of his chief carousing cups. One he calls his bull, another his bear, another his horse. And then he has his lesser glasses, that he calls his deer and his ape ; and several degrees of

them too ; and never is well, nor thinks any entertainment perfect, till these be brought out, and set on the cupboard.

CLER. : For God's love !—we should miss this, if we should not go.

TRUE. : Nay, he has a thousand things as good, that will speak him all day. He will rail on his wife, with certain common places, behind her back ; and to her face—

DAUP. : No more of him. Let's go see him, I petition you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—*A Room in* OTTER'S *House.*

Enter CAPTAIN OTTER *with his cups, and* MISTRESS OTTER.

OTT. : Nay, good princess, hear me *pauca verba.*

MRS. OTT. : By that light, I'll have you chain'd up, with your bull-dogs and bear-dogs, if you be not civil the sooner. I'll send you to kennel, i'faith. You were best bait me with your bull, bear, and horse. Never a time that the courtiers or collegiates come to the house, but you make it a Shrove-tuesday ! I would have you get your Whitsuntide velvet cap, and your staff in your hand, to entertain them : yes, in troth, do.

OTT. : Not so, princess, neither ; but under correction, sweet princess, give me leave.—These things I am known to the courtiers by : It is reported to them for my humour, and they receive it so, and do expect it. Tom Otter's bull, bear, and horse is known all over England, *in rerum natura.*

MRS. OTT. : 'Fore me, I will *na-ture* them over to Paris-garden, and *na-ture* you thither too, if you pronounce them again. Is a bear a fit beast, or a bull, to mix in society with great ladies ? think in your discretion, in any good policy.

OTT. : The horse then, good princess.

MRS. OTT. : Well, I am contented for the horse ; they love to be well horsed, I know : I love it myself.

OTT. : And it is a delicate fine horse this : *Poetarum Pegasus.* Under correction, princess, Jupiter did turn himself into a—*taurus,* or bull, under correction, good princess.

Enter TRUEWIT, CLERIMONT, *and* DAUPHINE, *behind.*

MRS. OTT. : By my integrity, I'll send you over to the Bank-side ; I'll commit you to the master of the Garden, if I hear but a syllable more. Must my house or my roof be polluted with the scent of bears and bulls, when it is perfumed for great ladies ? Is this according to the instrument, when I married you ? that I would be princess, and reign in mine own house ; and you would be my subject, and obey me ? What did you bring me, should make you thus peremptory ? do I allow you your half-crown a day, to spend where you will, among your gamesters, to vex and torment me at such times as these ? Who gives you your maintenance, I pray you ? who allows you your horse-meat and man's meat ? your three suits of apparel a year ? your four pair of stockings, one silk, three worsted ? your clean linen, your bands and cuffs, when I can get you to wear them ?—'tis marle you have them on now.—Who graces you with courtiers or great personages, to speak to you out of their coaches, and come home to your house ? Were you ever so much as look'd upon by a lord or a lady, before I married you, but on the Easter or Whitsun-holidays ? and then out at the banqueting-house window, when Ned Whiting or George Stone were at the stake ?

TRUE. : For God's sake, let's go stave her off him.

MRS. OTT. : Answer me to that. And did not I take you up from thence, in an

old greasy buff-doublet, with points, and green velvet sleeves, out at the elbows? you forget this.

TRUE. : She'll worry him, if we help not in time. [*They come forward.*

MRS. OTT. : O, here are some of the gallants! Go to, behave yourself distinctly, and with good morality; or, I protest, I'll take away your exhibition.

TRUE. : By your leave, fair mistress Otter, I'll be bold to enter these gentlemen in your acquaintance.

MRS. OTT. : It shall not be obnoxious, or difficil, sir.

TRUE : How does my noble captain? is the bull, bear, and horse in *rerum natura* still?

OTT. : Sir, *sic visum superis.*

MRS. OTT. : I would you would but intimate them, do. Go your ways in, and get toasts and butter made for the woodcocks: that's a fit province for you. [*Drives him off.*

CLER. : Alas, what a tyranny is this poor fellow married to!

TRUE. : O, but the sport will be anon, when we get him loose.

DAUP. : Dares he ever speak?

TRUE. : No Anabaptist ever rail'd with the like license: but mark her language in the mean time, I beseech you.

MRS. OTT. : Gentlemen, you are very aptly come. My cousin, sir Amorous, will be here briefly.

TRUE. : In good time, lady. Was not sir John Daw here, to ask for him, and the company?

MRS. OTT. : I cannot assure you, master Truewit. Here was a very melancholy knight in a ruff, that demanded my subject for somebody, a gentleman, I think.

CLER. : Ay, that was he, lady.

MRS. OTT. : But he departed straight, I can resolve you.

DAUP. : What an excellent choice phrase this lady expresses in.

TRUE. : O, sir, she is the only authentical courtier, that is not naturally bred one, in the city.

MRS. OTT. : You have taken that report upon trust, gentlemen.

TRUE. : No, I assure you, the court governs it so, lady, in your behalf.

MRS. OTT. : I am the servant of the court and courtiers, sir.

TRUE. : They are rather your idolaters.

MRS. OTT. : Not so, sir.

Enter CUTBEARD.

DAUP. : How now, Cutbeard! any cross?

CUT. : O no, sir, *omnia bene.* 'Twas never better on the hinges; all's sure. I have so pleased him with a curate, that he's gone to't almost with the delight he hopes for soon.

DAUP. : What is he for a vicar?

CUT. : One that has catch'd a cold, sir, and can scarce be heard six inches off; as if he spoke out of a bulrush that were not pick'd, or his throat were full of pith: a fine quick fellow, and an excellent barber of prayers. I came to tell you, sir, that you might *omnem movere lapidem,* as they say, be ready with your vexation.

DAUP. : Gramercy, honest Cutbeard! be thereabouts with thy key, to let us in.

CUT. : I will not fail you, sir; *ad manum.* [*Exit.*

TRUE. : Well, I'll go watch my coaches.

CLER. : Do; and we'll send Daw to you, if you meet him not. [*Exit* TRUEWIT.

MRS. OTT. : Is Master Truewit gone?

DAUP. : Yes, lady, there is some unfortunate business fallen out.

MRS. OTT. : So I adjudged by the physiognomy of the fellow that came in ; and I had a dream last night too of the new pageant, and my lady mayoress, which is always very ominous to me. I told it my lady Haughty t'other day, when her honour came hither to see some China stuffs ; and she expounded it out of Artemidorus, and I have found it since very true. It has done me many affronts.

CLER. : Your dream, lady ?

MRS. OTT. : Yes, sir, any thing, I do but dream of the city. It stain'd me a damask table-cloth, cost me eighteen pound, at one time ; and burnt me a black satin gown, as I stood by the fire, at my lady Centaure's chamber in the college, another time. A third time, at the lord's masque, it dropt all my wire and my ruff with wax candle, that I could not go up to the banquet. A fourth time, as I was taking coach to go Ware, to meet a friend, it dash'd me a new suit all over (a crimson satin doublet, and black velvet skirts) with a brewer's horse, that I was fain to go in and shift me, and kept my chamber a leash of days for the anguish of it.

DAUP. : These were dire mischances, lady.

CLER. : I would not dwell in the city, an 'twere so fatal to me.

MRS. OTT. : Yes, sir ; but I do take advice of my doctor to dream of it as little as I can.

DAUP. : You do well, mistress Otter.

Enter SIR JOHN DAW, *and is taken aside by* CLERIMONT.

MRS. OTT. : Will it please you to enter the house farther, gentlemen ?

DAUP. : And your favour, lady : but we stay to speak with a knight, sir John Daw, who is here come. We shall follow you, lady.

MRS. OTT. : At your own time, sir. It is my cousin sir Amorous his feast—

DAUP. : I know it, lady.

MRS. OTT. : And mine together. But it is for his honour, and therefore I take no name of it, more than of the place.

DAUP. : You are a bounteous kinswoman.

MRS. OTT. : Your servant, sir. [*Exit.*

CLER. (*coming forward with* DAW) : Why, do not you know it, sir John Daw ?

DAW : No, I am a rook if I do.

CLER. : I'll tell you, then ; she's married by this time. And, whereas you were put in the head, that she was gone with sir Dauphine, I assure you, sir Dauphine has been the noblest, honestest friend to you, that ever gentleman of your quality could boast of. He has discover'd the whole plot, and made your mistress so acknowledging, and indeed so ashamed of her injury to you, that she desires you to forgive her, and but grace her wedding with your presence to-day—She is to be married to a very good fortune, she says, his uncle, old Morose ; and she will'd me in private to tell you, that she shall be able to do you more favours, and with more security now than before.

DAW : Did she say so, i'faith ?

CLER. : Why, what do you think of me, sir John ? ask sir Dauphine.

DAW : Nay, I believe you.—Good sir Dauphine, did she desire me to forgive her ?

DAUP. : I assure you, sir John, she did.

DAW : Nay, then, I do with all my heart, and I'll be jovial.

CLER. : Yes, for look you, sir, this was the injury to you. La-Foole intended this feast to honour her bridal day, and made you the property to invite the college ladies, and promise to bring her ; and then at the time she would have

appeare'd, as his friend, to have given you the dor. Whereas now, sir Dauphine has brought her to a feeling of it, with this kind of satisfaction, that you shall bring all the ladies to the place where she is, and be very jovial ; and there, she will have a dinner, which shall be in your name : and so disappoint La-Foole, to make you good again, and, as it were, a saver in the main.

DAW : As I am a knight, I honour her ; and forgive her heartily.

CLER. : About it then presently. Truewit is gone before to confront the coaches, and to acquaint you with so much, if he meet you. Join with him, and 'tis well.—

Enter SIR AMOROUS LA-FOOLE.

See : here comes your antagonist ; but take you no notice, but be very jovial.

LA-F. : Are the ladies come, Sir John Daw, and your mistress ? (*Exit* DAW.)—Sir Dauphine ! you are exceeding welcome, and honest master Clerimont. Where's my cousin ? did you see no collegiates, gentlemen ?

DAUP. : Collegiates ! do you not hear, sir Amorous, how you are abused ?

LA-F. : How, sir !

CLER. : Will you speak so kindly to sir John Daw, that has done you such an affront ?

LA-F. : Wherein, gentlemen ? let me be a suitor to you to know, I beseech you.

CLER. : Why, sir, his mistress is married to-day to sir Dauphine's uncle, your cousin's neighbour, and he has diverted all the ladies, and all your company thither, to frustrate your provision, and stick a disgrace upon you. He was here now to have enticed us away from you too : but we told him his own, I think.

LA-F. : Has sir John Daw wrong'd me so inhumanly ?

DAUP. : He has done it, sir Amorous, most maliciously and treacherously : but, if you'll be ruled by us, you shall quit him, i'faith.

LA-F. : Good gentlemen, I'll make one, believe it. How, I pray ?

DAUP. : Marry, sir, get me your pheasants, and your godwits, and your best meat, and dish it in silver dishes of your cousin's presently ; and say nothing, but clap me a clean towel about you, like a sewer ; and, bare-headed, march afore it with a good confidence, (tis' but over the way, hard by,) and we'll second you, where you shall set it on the board, and bid them welcome to't, which shall show 'tis yours, and disgrace his preparation utterly : and for your cousin, whereas she should be troubled here at home with care of making and giving welcome, she shall transfer all that labour thither, and be a principal guest herself ; sit rank'd with the college-honours, and be honour'd, and have her health drunk as often, as bare and as loud as the best of them.

LA-F. : I'll go tell her presently. It shall be done, that's resolved. [*Exit.*

CLER. : I thought he would not hear it out, but 'twould take him.

DAUP. : Well, there be guests and meat now ; how shall we do for music ?

CLER. : The smell of the venison, going through the street, will invite one noise of fiddlers or other.

DAUP. : I would it would call the trumpeters hither !

CLER. : Faith, there is hope : they have intelligence of all feasts. There's good correspondence betwixt them and the London cooks : 'tis twenty to one but we have them.

DAUP. : 'Twill be a most solemn day for my uncle, and an excellent fit of mirth for us.

CLER. : Ay, if we can hold up the emulation betwixt Foole and Daw, and never bring them to expostulate.

DAUP. : Tut, flatter them both, as Truewit says, and you may take their understandings in a purse-net. They'll believe themselves to be just such men as we make them, neither more nor less. They have nothing, not the use of their senses, but by tradition.

Re-enter LA-FOOLE, *like a Sewer.*

CLER. : See ! sir Amorous has his towel on already. Have you persuaded your cousin ?

LA-F. : Yes, 'tis very feasible : she'll do any thing, she says, rather than the La-Fooles shall be disgraced.

DAUP. : She is a noble kinswoman. It will be such a pestling device, sir Amorous ; it will pound all your enemy's practices to powder, and blow him up with his own mine, his own train.

LA-F. : Nay, we'll give fire, I warrant you.

CLER. : But you must carry it privately, without any noise, and take no notice by any means—

Re-enter CAPTAIN OTTER.

OTT. : Gentlemen, my princess says you shall have all her silver dishes, *festinate :* and she's gone to alter her tire a little, and go with you—

CLER. : And yourself too, captain Otter ?

DAUP. : By any means, sir.

OTT. : Yes, sir, I do mean it : but I would entreat my cousin sir Amorous, and you, gentlemen, to be suitors to my princess, that I may carry my bull and my bear, as well as my horse.

CLER. : That you shall do, captain Otter.

LA-F. : My cousin will never consent, gentlemen.

DAUP. : She must consent, sir Amorous, to reason.

LA-F. : Why, she says they are no decorum among ladies.

OTT. : But they are *decora*, and that's better, sir.

CLER. : Ay, she must hear argument. Did not Pasiphaë, who was a queen, love a bull ? and was not Calisto, the mother of Arcas, turn'd into a bear, and made a star, mistress Ursula, in the heavens ?

OTT. : O lord ! that I could have said as much ! I will have these stories painted in the Bear-garden, *ex Ovidii metamorphosi.*

DAUP. : Where is your princess, captain ? pray, be our leader.

OTT. : That I shall, sir.

CLER. : Make haste, good sir Amorous. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* MOROSE'S *House.*

Enter MOROSE, EPICŒNE, PARSON, *and* CUTBEARD.

MOR. : Sir, there's an angel for yourself, and a brace of angels for your cold. Muse not at this manage of my bounty. It is fit we should thank fortune, double to nature, for any benefit she confers upon us ; besides, it is your imperfection, but my solace.

PAR. (*speaks as having a cold*) : I thank your worship ; so it is mine, now.

MOR. : What says he, Cutbeard ?

CUT. : He says, *præsto*, sir, whensoever your worship needs him, he can be ready with the like. He got this cold with sitting up late, and singing catches with cloth-workers.

MOR. : No more. I thank him.

PAR. : God keep your worship, and give you much joy with your fair spouse ! —uh ! uh ! uh !

MOR. : O, O ! stay, Cutbeard ! let him give me five shillings of my money back. As it is bounty to reward benefits, so it is equity to mulct injuries. I will have it. What says he ?

CLER. : He cannot change it, sir.

MOR. : It must be changed.

CUT. : Cough again. [*Aside to* PARSON.

MOR. : What says he ?

CUT. : He will cough out the rest, sir.

PAR. : Uh, uh, uh !

MOR. : Away, away with him ! stop his mouth ! away ! I forgive it.— [*Exit.* CUT. *thrusting out the* PAR.

EPI. : Fie, master Morose, that you will use this violence to a man of the church !

MOR. How !

EPI. : It does not become your gravity, or breeding, as you pretend, in court, to have offer'd this outrage on a waterman, or any more boisterous creature, much less on a man of his civil coat.

MOR. : You can speak then !

EPI. : Yes, sir.

MOR. : Speak out, I mean.

EPI. : Ay, sir. Why, did you think you had married a statue, or a motion only ? one of the French puppets, with the eyes turn'd with a wire ? or some innocent out of the hospital, that would stand with her hands thus, and a plaise mouth, and look upon you ?

MOR. : O immodesty ! a manifest woman ! What, Cutbeard !

EPI. : Nay, never quarrel with Cutbeard, sir ; it is too late now. I confess it doth bate somewhat of the modesty I had, when I writ simply maid : but I hope I shall make it a stock still competent to the estate and dignity of your wife.

MOR. : She can talk !

EPI. : Yes, indeed, sir.

Enter MUTE.

MOR. : What sirrah ! None of my knaves there ? where is this impostor Cutbeard ? [MUTE *makes signs.*

EPI. : Speak to him, fellow, speak to him ! I'll have none of his coacted, unnatural dumbness in my house, in a family where I govern. [*Exit* MUTE.

MOR. : She is my regent already ! I have married a Penthesilea, a Semiramis ; sold my liberty to a distaff.

Enter TRUEWIT.

TRUE. : Where's Master Morose ?

MOR. : Is he come again ! Lord have mercy upon me !

TRUE. : I wish you all joy, mistress Epicœne, with your grave and honourable match.

EPI. : I return you the thanks, master Truewit, so friendly a wish deserves.

MOR. : She has acquaintance, too !

TRUE. : God save you, sir, and give you all contentment in your fair choice, here ! Before, I was the bird of night to you, the owl ; but now I am the messenger of peace, a dove, and bring you the glad wishes of many friends to the celebration of this good hour.

MOR. : What hour, sir ?

TRUE. : Your marriage hour, sir. I commend your resolution, that, not withstanding all the dangers I laid afore you, in the voice of a night-crow, would yet go on, and be yourself. It shews you are a man constant to your own ends, and upright to your purposes, that would not be put off with left-handed cries.

MOR. : How should you arrive at the knowledge of so much ?

TRUE. : Why, did you ever hope, sir, committing the secrecy of it to a barber, that less than the whole town should know it ? you might as well have told it the conduit, or the bake-house, or the infantry that follow the court, and with more security. Could your gravity forget so old and noted a remnant, as, *lippis et tonsoribus notum ?* Well, sir, forgive it yourself now, the fault, and be communicable with your friends. Here will be three or four fashionable ladies from the college to visit you presently, and their train of minions and followers.

MOR. : Bar my doors ! bar my doors ! Where are all my eaters ? my mouths, now ?—

Enter SERVANTS.

Bar up my doors, you varlets !

EPI. : He is a varlet that stirs to such an office. Let them stand open. I would see him that dares move his eyes toward it. Shall I have a barricado made against my friends, to be barr'd of any pleasure they can bring in to me with their honourable visitation ? [*Exeunt* SER.

MOR. : O Amazonian impudence !

TRUE. : Nay, faith, in this, sir, she speaks but reason ; and, methinks, is more continent than you. Would you go to bed so presently, sir, afore noon ? a man of your head and hair should owe more to that reverend ceremony, and not mount the marriage-bed like a town-bull, or a mountain-goat ; but stay the due season ; and ascend it then with religion and fear. Those delights are to be steeped in the humour and silence of the night ; and give the day to other open pleasures, and jollities of feasting, of music, of revels, of discourse : we'll have all, sir, that may make your Hymen high and happy.

MOR. : O my torment, my torment !

TRUE. : Nay, if you endure the first half hour, sir, so tediously, and with this irksomeness ; what comfort or hope can this fair gentlewoman make to herself hereafter, in the consideration of so many years as are to come.

MOR. : Of my affliction. Good sir, depart, and let her do it alone.

TRUE. : I have done, sir.

MOR. : That cursed barber.

TRUE. : Yes, faith, a cursed wretch indeed, sir.

MOR. : I have married his cittern, that's common to all men. Some plague above the plague—

TRUE. : All Egypt's ten plagues.

MOR. : Revenge me on him !

TRUE. : 'Tis very well, sir. If you laid on a curse or two more, I'll assure you he'll bear them. As, that he may get the pox with seeking to cure it, sir ; or, that while he is curling another man's hair, his own may drop off ; or, for burning some male-bawd's lock, he may have his brain beat out with the curling iron.

MOR. : No, let the wretch live wretched. May he get the itch, and his shop so lousy, as no man dare come at him, nor he come at no man !

TRUE. : Ay, and if he would swallow all his balls for pills, let not them purge him.

MOR. : Let his warming-pan be ever cold.

TRUE. : A perpetual frost underneath it, sir.
MOR. : Let him never hope to see fire again.
TRUE. : But in hell, sir.
MOR. : His chairs be always empty, his scissars rust, and his combs mould in their cases.
TRUE. : Very dreadful that ! And may he lose the invention, sir, of carving lanterns in paper.
MOR. : Let there be no bawd carted that year, to employ a bason of his : but let him be glad to eat his sponge for bread.
TRUE. : And drink lotium to it, and much good to him.
MOR. : Or, for want of bread.
TRUE. : Eat ear-wax, sir. I'll help you. Or, draw his own teeth, and add them to the lute-string.
MOR. : No, beat the old ones to powder, and make bread of them.
TRUE. : Yes, make meal of the mill-stones.
MOR. : May all the botches and burns that he has cured on others break out upon him.
TRUE. : And he now forget the cure of them in himself, sir ; or, if he do remember it, let him have scraped all his linen into lint for't, and have not a rag left him for to set up with.
MOR. : Let him never set up again, but have the gout in his hands for ever !—Now, no more, sir.
TRUE. : O, that last was too high set ; you might go less with him, i'faith, and be revenged enough : as, that he be never able to new-paint his pole—
MOR. : Good sir, no more, I forgot myself.
TRUE. : Or, want credit to take up with a comb-maker—
MOR. : No more, sir.
TRUE. : Or, having broken his glass in a former despair, fall now into a much greater, of ever getting another—
MOR. : I beseech you, no more.
TRUE. : Or, that he never be trusted with trimming of any but chimney-sweepers—
MOR. : Sir—
TRUE. : Or, may he cut a collier's throat with his razor, by chance-medley, and and yet be hang'd for't.
MOR. : I will forgive him, rather than hear any more. I beseech you, sir.

Enter DAW, *introducing* LADY HAUGHTY, CENTAURE, MAVIS, *and* TRUSTY.

DAW : This way, madam.
MOR. : O, the sea breaks in upon me ! another flood ! an inundation ! I shall be overwhelmed with noise. It beats already at my shores. I feel an earthquake in my self for't.
DAW : 'Give you joy, mistress.
MOR. : Has she servants too !
DAW : I have brought some ladies here to see and know you. My lady Haughty —(*as he presents them severally,* EPI. *kisses them.*) this my lady Centaure—mistress Dol Mavis—mistress Trusty, my lady Haughty's woman. Where's your husband ? let's see him : can he endure no noise ? let me come to him.
MOR. : What nomenclator is this !
TRUE. : Sir John Daw, sir, your wife's servant, this.
MOR. : A Daw, and her servant ! O, 'tis decreed, 'tis decreed of me, an she have such servants. [*Going.*
TRUE. : Nay, sir, you must kiss the ladies ; you must not go away, now : they come toward you to seek you out.

HAU. : I' faith, master Morose, would you steal a marriage thus, in the midst of so many friends, and not acquaint us ? Well, I'll kiss you, notwithstanding the justice of my quarrel : you shall give me leave, mistress, to use a becoming familiarity with your husband.

EPI. : Your ladyship does me an honour in it, to let me know he is so worthy your favour : as you have done both him and me grace to visit so unprepared a pair to entertain you.

MOR. : Compliment ! compliment !

EPI. : But I must lay the burden of that upon my servant here.

HAU. : It shall not need, mistress Morose; we will all bear, rather than one shall be opprest.

MOR. : I know it : and you will teach her the faculty, if she be to learn it.

[*Walks aside while the rest talk apart.*

HAU. : Is this the silent woman ?

EN. : Nay, she has found her tongue since she was married, master Truewit says.

HAU. : O, master Truewit ! 'save you. What kind of creature is your bride here ? she speaks, methinks !

RUE. : Yes, madam, believe it, she is a gentlewoman of very absolute behaviour, and of a good race.

HAU. : And Jack Daw told us she could not speak !

RUE. : So it was carried in plot, madam, to put her upon this old fellow, by sir Dauphine, his nephew, and one or two more of us : but she is a woman of an excellent assurance, and an extraordinary happy wit and tongue. You shall see her make rare sport with Daw ere night.

HAU. : And he brought us to laugh at her !

RUE. : That falls out often, madam, that he that thinks himself the master-wit, is the master-fool. I assure your ladyship, ye cannot laugh at her.

HAU. : No, we'll have her to the college : An she have wit, she shall be one of us, shall she not, Centaure ? we'll make her a collegiate.

EN. : Yes, faith, madam, and Mavis and she will set up a side.

RUE. : Believe it, madam, and mistress Mavis she will sustain her part.

AV. : I'll tell you that, when I have talk'd with her, and tried her.

HAU. : Use her very civilly, Mavis.

AV. : So I will, madam. [*Whispers her.*

MOR. : Blessed minute ! that they would whisper thus ever ! [*Aside.*

RUE. : In the mean time, madam, would but your ladyship help to vex him a little : you know his disease, talk to him about the wedding ceremonies, or call for your gloves, or—

HAU. : Let me alone. Centaure, help me.—Master bridegroom, where are you ?

MOR. : O, it was too miraculously good to last ! [*Aside.*

HAU. : We see no ensigns of a wedding here ; no character of a bride-ale : where be our scarves and our gloves ? I pray you, give them us. Let us know your bride's colours, and yours at least.

EN. : Alas, madam, he has provided none.

MOR. : Had I known your ladyship's painter, I would.

HAU. : He has given it you, Centaure, i'faith. But do you hear, master Morose ? a jest will not absolve you in this manner. You that have suck'd the milk of the court, and from thence have been brought up to the very strong meats and wine of it ; been a courtier from the biggen to the night-cap, as we may say, and you to offend in such a high point of ceremony as this, and let your nuptials want all marks of solemnity ! How much plate have you lost to-day, (if you had but regarded your profit,) what gifts, what friends, through your mere rusticity !

MOR. : Madam—

HAU. : Pardon me, sir, I must insinuate your errors to you ; no gloves ? no garters ? no scarves ? no epithalamium ? no masque ?

DAW : Yes, madam, I'll make an epithalamium, I promise my mistress ; I have begun it already : will your ladyship hear it ?

HAU. : Ay, good Jack Daw.

MOR. : Will it please your ladyship command a chamber, and be private with your friend ? you shall have your choice of rooms to retire to after : my whole house is yours. I know it hath been your ladyship's errand into the city at other times, however now you have been unhappily diverted upon me ; but I shall be loth to break any honourable custom of your ladyship's. And therefore, good madam—

EPI. : Come, you are a rude bridegroom, to entertain ladies of honour in this fashion.

CEN. : He is a rude groom indeed.

TRUE. : By that light you deserve to be grafted, and have your horns reach from one side of the island to the other.—Do not mistake me, sir ; I but speak this to give the ladies some heart again, not for any malice to you.

MOR. : Is this your bravo, ladies ?

TRUE. : As God (shall) help me, if you utter such another word, I'll take mistress bride in, and begin to you in a very sad cup ; do you see ? Go to, know your friends, and such as love you.

Enter CLERIMONT, *followed by a number of* MUSICIANS.

CLER. : By your leave, ladies. Do you want any music ? I have brought you variety of noises. Play, sirs, all of you.

[*Aside to the* MUSICIANS, *who strike up all together.*

MOR. : O, a plot, a plot, a plot, a plot, upon me ! this day I shall be their anvil to work on, they will grate me asunder. 'Tis worse than the noise of a saw.

CLER. : No, they are hair, rosin, and guts : I can give you the receipt.

TRUE. : Peace, boys !

CLER. : Play ! I say.

TRUE. : Peace, rascals ! You see who's your friend now, sir : take courage, put on a martyr's resolution. Mock down all their attemptings with patience : 'tis but a day, and I would suffer heroically. Should an ass exceed me in fortitude ? no. You betray your infirmity with your hanging dull ears, and make them insult : bear up bravely, and constantly. (LA-FOOLE *passes over the stage as a Sewer, followed by* SERVANTS *carrying dishes, and* MISTRESS OTTER.) —Look you here, sir, what honour is done you unexpected, by your nephew ; a wedding-dinner come, and a knight-sewer before it, for the more reputation : and fine Mistress Otter, your neighbour, in the rump or tail of it.

MOR. : Is that Gorgon, that Medusa come ! hide me, hide me.

TRUE. I warrant you, sir, she will not transform you. Look upon her with a good courage. Pray you entertain her, and conduct your guests in. No !—Mistress bride, will you entreat in the ladies ? your bridegroom is so shame-faced, here.

EPI. : Will it please your ladyship, madam ?

HAU. : With the benefit of your company, mistress.

EPI. : Servant, pray you perform your duties.

DAW : And glad to be commanded, mistress.

CEN. : How like you her wit, Mavis ?

MAV. : Very prettily, absolutely well.

MRS. OTT. 'Tis my place.

[AV. : You shall pardon me, Mistress Otter.
[RS. OTT. : Why, I am a collegiate.
[AV. : But not in ordinary.
[RS. OTT. : But I am.
[AV. : We'll dispute that within. [*Exeunt* LADIES.
LER. : Would this had lasted a little longer.
RUE. : And that they had sent for the heralds.

Enter CAPTAIN OTTER.

—Captain Otter, what news ?
TT. : I have brought my bull, bear, and horse, in private, and yonder are the trumpeters without, and the drum, gentlemen.
[*The drum and trumpets sound within.*
[OR. : O, O, O !
TT. : And we will have a rouse in each of them, anon, for bold Britons, i'faith.
[*They sound again.*
[OR. : O, O, O ! [*Exit hastily.*
MNES. : Follow, follow, follow ! [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*A Room in* MOROSE'S *House.*

Enter TRUEWIT *and* CLERIMONT.

RUE. : Was there ever poor bridegroom so tormented ? or man, indeed ?
LER. : I have not read of the like in the chronicles of the land.
RUE. : Sure, he cannot but go to a place of rest, after all this purgatory.
LER. : He may, presume it, I think.
RUE. : The spitting, the coughing, the laughter, the neezing, the farting, dancing, noise of the music, and her masculine and loud commanding, and urging the whole family, makes him think he has married a fury.
LER. : And she carries it up bravely.
RUE. : Ay, she takes any occasion to speak : that's the height on't.
LER. : And how soberly Dauphine labours to satisfy him, that it was none of his plot !
RUE. : And has almost brought him to the faith, in the article. Here he comes.—

Enter SIR DAUPHINE.

Where is he now ? what's become of him, Dauphine ?
AUP. : O, hold me up a little, I shall go away in the jest else. He has got on his whole nest of night-caps, and lock'd himself up in the top of the house, as high as ever he can climb from the noise. I peep'd in at a cranny, and saw him sitting over a cross-beam of the roof, like him on the saddler's horse in Fleet Street, upright : and he will sleep there.
LER. : But where are your collegiates ?
AUP. : Withdrawn with the bride in private.
RUE. : O, they are instructing her in the college-grammar. If she have grace with them, she knows all their secrets instantly.
LER. : Methinks the lady Haughty looks well to-day, for all my dispraise of her in the morning. I think, I shall come about to thee again, Truewit.
RUE. : Believe it, I told you right. Women ought to repair the losses time and years have made in their features, with dressings. And an intelligent woman, if she know by herself the least defect, will be most curious to hide it : and it becomes her. If she be short, let her sit much, lest, when she stands, she be

thought to sit. If she have an ill foot, let her wear her gown the longer, and her shoe the thinner. If a fat hand, and scald nails, let her carve the less, and act in gloves. If a sour breath, let her never discourse fasting, and always talk at her distance. If she have black and rugged teeth, let her offer the less at laughter, especially if she laugh wide and open.

CLER. : O, you shall have some women, when they laugh, you would think they brayed, it is so rude and—

TRUE. : Ay, and others, that will stalk in their gait like an estrich, and take huge strides. I cannot endure such a sight. I love measure in the feet, and number in the voice : they are gentlenesses, that oftentimes draw no less than the face.

DAUP. : How camest thou to study these creatures so exactly ? I would thou wouldst make me a proficient.

TRUE. : Yes, but you must leave to live in your chamber, then, a month together upon Amadis de Gaul, or Don Quixote, as you are wont ; and come abroad where the matter is frequent, to court, to tiltings, public shows and feasts, to plays, and church sometimes : thither they come to shew their new tires too, to see, and to be seen. In these places a man shall find whom to love, whom to play with, whom to touch once, whom to hold ever. The variety arrests his judgment. A wench to please a man comes not down dropping from the ceiling, as he lies on his back droning a tobacco-pipe. He must go where she is.

DAUP. : Yes, and be never the nearer.

TRUE. : Out, heretic ! That diffidence makes thee worthy it should be so.

CLER. : He says true to you, Dauphine.

DAUP. : Why ?

TRUE. : A man should not doubt to overcome any woman. Think he can vanquish them, and he shall : for though they deny, their desire is to be tempted. Penelope herself cannot hold out long. Ostend, you saw, was taken at last. You must persever, and hold to your purpose. They would solicit us, but that they are afraid. Howsoever, they wish in their hearts we should solicit them. Praise them, flatter them, you shall never want eloquence or trust : even the chastest delight to feel themselves that way rubb'd. With praises you must mix kisses too : if they take them, they'll take more—though they strive, they would be overcome.

CLER. : O, but a man must beware of force.

TRUE. : It is to them an acceptable violence, and has oft-times the place of the greatest courtesy. She that might have been forced, and you let her go free without touching, though then she seem to thank you, will ever hate you after ; and glad in the face, is assuredly sad at the heart.

CLER. : But all women are not to be taken all ways.

TRUE. : 'Tis true ; no more than all birds, or all fishes. If you appear learned to an ignorant wench, or jocund to a sad, or witty to a foolish, why she presently begins to mistrust herself. You must approach them in their own height, their own line ; for the contrary makes many, that fear to commit themselves to noble and worthy fellows, run into the embraces of a rascal. If she love wit, give verses, though you borrow them of a friend, or buy them, to have good. If valour, talk of your sword, and be frequent in the mention of quarrels, though you be staunch in fighting. If activity, be seen on your barbary often, or leaping over stools, for the credit of your back. If she love good clothes or dressing, have your learned council about you every morning, your French tailor, barber, linener, etc. Let your powder, your glass, and your comb be your dearest acquaintance. Take more care for the ornament of your head, than the safety ; and wish the commonwealth rather troubled, than a hair

about you. That will take her. Then, if she be covetous and craving, do you promise any thing, and perform sparingly ; so shall you keep her in appetite still. Seem as you would give, but be like a barren field, that yields little ; or unlucky dice to foolish and hoping gamesters. Let your gifts be slight and dainty, rather than precious. Let cunning be above cost. Give cherries at time of year, or apricots ; and say, they were sent you out of the country, though you bought them in Cheapside. Admire her tires : like her in all fashions ; compare her in every habit to some deity ; invent excellent dreams to flatter her, and riddles ; or, if she be a great one, perform always the second parts to her : like what she likes, praise whom she praises, and fail not to make the household and servants yours, yea, the whole family, and salute them by their names, ('tis but light cost, if you can purchase them so,) and make her physician your pensioner, and her chief woman. Nor will it be out of your gain to make love to her too, so she follow, not usher her lady's pleasure. All blabbing is taken away, when she comes to be a part of the crime.

DAUP. : On what courtly lap hast thou late slept, to come forth so sudden and absolute a courtling ?

TRUE. : Good faith, I should rather question you, that are so hearkening after these mysteries. I begin to suspect your diligence, Dauphine. Speak, art thou in love in earnest ?

DAUP. : Yes, by my troth, am I ; 'twere ill dissembling before thee.

TRUE. : With which of them, I prithee ?

DAUP. : With all the collegiates.

CLER. : Out on thee ! We'll keep you at home, believe it, in the stable, an you be such a stallion.

TRUE. : No ; I like him well. Men should love wisely, and all women ; some one for the face, and let her please the eye ; another for the skin, and let her please the touch ; a third for the voice, and let her please the ear ; and where the objects mix, let the senses so too. Thou would'st think it strange, if I should make them all in love with thee afore night !

DAUP. : I would say, thou hadst the best philtre in the world, and couldst do more than madam Medea, or doctor Foreman.

TRUE. : If I do not, let me play the mountebank for my meat, while I live, and the bawd for my drink.

DAUP. : So be it, I say.

Enter OTTER, *with his three Cups*, DAW, *and* LA-FOOLE.

OTT. : O lord, gentlemen, how my knights and I have mist you here !

CLER. : Why, captain, what service, what service ?

OTT. : To see me bring up my bull, bear, and horse to fight.

DAW : Yes, faith, the captain says we shall be his dogs to bait them.

DAUP. : A good employment.

TRUE. : Come on, let's see your course, then.

LA-F. : I am afraid my cousin will be offended, if she come.

OTT. : Be afraid of nothing.—Gentlemen, I have placed the drum and the trumpets, and one to give them the sign when you are ready. Here's my bull for myself, and my bear for sir John Daw, and my horse for sir Amorous. Now set your foot to mine, and yours to his, and—

LA-F. : Pray God my cousin come not.

OTT. : St. George, and St. Andrew, fear no cousins. Come, sound, sound ! (*Drum and trumpets sound.*) *Et rauco strepuerunt cornua cantu.* [*They drink.*

TRUE. : Well said, captain, i'faith ; well fought at the bull.

CLER. : Well held at the bear.

TRUE. : Low, low ! captain.
DAUP. : O, the horse has kick'd off his dog already.
LA-F. : I cannot drink it, as I am a knight.
TRUE. : Ods so ! off with his spurs, somebody.
LA-F. : It goes against my conscience. My cousin will be angry with it.
DAW : I have done mine.
TRUE. : You fought high and fair, sir John.
CLER. : At the head.
DAUP. : Like an excellent bear-dog.
CLER. : You take no notice of the business, I hope ?
DAW : Not a word, sir ; you see we are jovial.
OTT. : Sir Amorous, you must not equivocate.
It must be pull'd down, for all my cousin.
CLER. : 'Sfoot, if you take not your drink, they'll think you are discontented with something ; you'll betray all, if you take the least notice.
LA-F. : Not I ; I'll both drink and talk then.
OTT. : You must pull the horse on his knees, sir Amorous ; fear no cousins. *Jacta est alea.*
TRUE. : O, now he's in his vein, and bold. The least hint given him of his wife now, will make him rail desperately.
CLER. : Speak to him of her.
TRUE. : Do you, and I'll fetch her to the hearing of it. [*Exit.*
DAUP. : Captain He-Otter, your She-Otter is coming, your wife.
OTT. : Wife ! buz ? *titivilitium !* There's no such thing in nature. I confess, gentlemen, I have a cook, a laundress, a house-drudge, that serves my necessary turns, and goes under that title ; but he's an ass that will be so uxorious to tie his affections to one circle. Come, the name dulls appetite. Here, replenish again ; another bout. (*Fills the cups again.*) Wives are nasty, sluttish animals.
DAUP. : O, captain.
OTT. : As ever the earth bare, *tribus verbis*.—Where's master Truewit ?
DAW : He's slipt aside, sir.
CLER. : But you must drink and be jovial.
DAW : Yes, give it me.
LA-F. : And me too.
DAW : Let's be jovial.
LA-F. : As jovial as you will.
OTT. : Agreed. Now you shall have the bear, cousin, and sir John Daw the horse, and I'll have the bull still. Sound, Tritons of the Thames ! (*Drum and trumpets sound again.*) *Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero*—
MOR. (*above*) : Villains, murderers, sons of the earth, and traitors, what do you there ?
CLER. : O, now the trumpets have waked him, we shall have his company.
OTT. : A wife is a scurvy clogdogdo, an unlucky thing, a very foresaid bear-whelp, without any good fashion or breeding, *malabestia*.

Re-enter TRUEWIT *behind, with* MISTRESS OTTER.

DAUP. : Why did you marry one then, captain ?
OTT. : A pox !—I married with six thousand pound, I. I was in love with that. I have not kissed my Fury these forty weeks.
CLER. : The more to blame you, captain.
TRUE. : Nay, mistress Otter, hear him a little first.
OTT. : She has a breath worse than my grandmother's, *profecto*.

IRS. OTT. : O treacherous liar ! kiss me, sweet Master Truewit, and prove him a slandering knave.

RUE. : I'll rather believe you, lady.

TT. : And she has a peruke that's like a pound of hemp, made up in shoe-threads.

IRS. OTT. : O viper, mandrake !

TT. : O most vile face ! and yet she spends me forty pound a year in mercury and hogs-bones. All her teeth were made in the Blackfriars, both her eye-brows in the Strand, and her hair in Silver Street. Every part of the town owns a piece of her.

IRS. OTT. (*comes forward*) : I cannot hold.

TT. : She takes herself asunder still when she goes to bed, into some twenty boxes ; and about next day noon is put together again, like a great German clock : and so comes forth, and rings a tedious larum to the whole house, and then is quiet again for an hour, but for her quarters—Have you done me right, gentlemen ?

IRS. OTT. (*falls upon him, and beats him*) : No, sir, I'll do you right with my quarters, with my quarters.

TT. : O, hold, good princess.

RUE. : Sound, sound ! [*Drum and trumpets sound.*

LER. : A battle, a battle !

IRS. OTT. : You notorious stinkardly bearward, does my breath smell ?

TT. : Under correction, dear princess.—Look to my bear and my horse, gentlemen.

IRS. OTT. : Do I want teeth, and eyebrows, thou bull-dog ?

RUE. : Sound, sound still. [*They sound again.*

TT. : No, I protest, under correction—

IRS. OTT. : Ay, now you are under correction, you protest : but you did not protest before correction, sir. Thou Judas, to offer to betray thy princess ! I'll make thee an example— [*Beats him.*

Enter MOROSE *with his long sword.*

OR. : I will have no such examples in my house, Lady Otter.

IRS. OTT. : Ah !— [MRS. OTTER, DAW, *and* LA-FOOLE, *run off.*

OR. : Mistress Mary Ambree, your examples are dangerous.—Rogues, hell-hounds, Stentors ! out of my doors, you sons of noise and tumult, begot on an ill May-day, or when the galley-foist is afloat to Westminster ! (*Drives out the musicians.*) A trumpeter could not be conceived but then.

AUP. : What ails you, sir ?

OR. : They have rent my roof, walls, and all my windows asunder, with their brazen throats. [*Exit.*

RUE. : Best follow him, Dauphine.

AUP. : So I will. [*Exit.*

LER. : Where's Daw and La-Foole ?

TT. : They are both run away, sir. Good gentlemen, help to pacify my princess, and speak to the great ladies for me. Now must I go lie with the bears this fortnight, and keep out of the way, till my peace be made, for this scandal she has taken. Did you not see my bull-head, gentlemen ?

LER. : Is't not on, captain ?

RUE. : No ; but he may make a new one, by that is on.

TT. : O, here it is. An you come over, gentlemen, and ask for Tom Otter, we'll go down to Ratcliff, and have a course i'faith, for all these disasters. There is *bona spes* left.

TRUE. : Away, captain, get off while you are well. [*Exit* OTTER.

CLER. : I am glad we are rid of him.

TRUE. : You had never been, unless we had put his wife upon him. His humour is as tedious at last, as it was ridiculous at first. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A long open Gallery in the same.*

Enter LADY HAUGHTY, MISTRESS OTTER, MAVIS, DAW, LA-FOOLE, CENTAURE, *and* EPICŒNE.

HAU. : We wonder'd why you shriek'd so, mistress Otter.

MRS. OTT. : O lord, madam, he came down with a huge long naked weapon in both his hands, and look'd so dreadfully ! sure he's beside himself.

MAV. : Why, what made you there, mistress Otter ?

MRS. OTT. : Alas, mistress Mavis, I was chastising my subject, and thought nothing of him.

DAW : Faith, mistress, you must do so too : learn to chastise. Mistress Otter corrects her husband so, he dares not speak but under correction.

LA-F. : And with his hat off to her : 'twould do you good to see.

HAU. : In sadness, 'tis good and mature counsel ; practise it, Morose. I'll call you Morose still now, as I call Centaure and Mavis ; we four will be all one.

CEN. : And you'll come to the college, and live with us ?

HAU. : Make him give milk and honey.

MAV. : Look how you manage him at first, you shall have him ever after.

CEN. : Let him allow you your coach, and four horses, your woman, your chamber-maid, your page, your gentleman-usher, your French cook, and four grooms.

HAU. : And go with us to Bedlam, to the china-houses, and to the Exchange.

CEN. : It will open the gate to your fame.

HAU. : Here's Centaure has immortalised herself, with taming of her wild male.

MAV. : Ay, she has done the miracle of the kingdom.

Enter CLERIMONT *and* TRUEWIT.

EPI. : But, ladies, do you count it lawful to have such plurality of servants, and do them all graces ?

HAU. : Why not ? why should women deny their favours to men ? are they the poorer or the worse ?

DAW : Is the Thames the less for the dyers' water, mistress ?

LA-F. : Or a torch for lighting many torches ?

TRUE. : Well said, La-Foole ; what a new one he has got !

CEN. : They are empty losses women fear in this kind.

HAU. : Besides, ladies should be mindful of the approach of age, and let no time want his due use. The best of our days pass first.

MAV. : We are rivers, that cannot be call'd back, madam : she that now excludes her lovers, may live to lie a forsaken beldame, in a frozen bed.

CEN. : 'Tis true, Mavis : and who will wait on us to coach then ? or write, or tell us the news then, make anagrams of our names, and invite us to the Cockpit, and kiss our hands all the play-time, and draw their weapons for our honours ?

HAU. : Not one.

DAW : Nay, my mistress is not altogether unintelligent of these things ; here be in presence have tasted of her favours.

CLER. : What a neighing hobby-horse is this !

EPI. : But not with intent to boast them again, servant.—And have you those excellent receipts, madam, to keep yourselves from bearing of children ?

IAU. : O yes, Morose : how should we maintain our youth and beauty else ? Many births of a woman make her old, as many crops make the earth barren.

Enter MOROSE *and* DAUPHINE.

IOR. : O my cursed angel, that instructed me to this fate !
)AUP. : Why, sir ?
IOR. : That I should be seduced by so foolish a devil as a barber will make !
)AUP. : I would I had been worthy, sir, to have partaken your counsel ; you should never have trusted it to such a minister.
IOR. : Would I could redeem it with the loss of an eye, nephew, a hand, or any other member.
)AUP. : Marry, God forbid, sir, that you should geld yourself, to anger your wife.
IOR. : So it would rid me of her !—and, that I did supererogatory penance in a belfry, at Westminster Hall, in the Cockpit, at the fall of a stag, the Tower Wharf—what place is there else ?—London Bridge, Paris Garden, Billinsgate, when the noises are at their height, and loudest. Nay, I would sit out a play, that were nothing but fights at sea, drum, trumpet, and target.
)AUP. : I hope there shall be no such need, sir. Take patience, good uncle. This is but a day, and 'tis well worn too now.
IOR. : O, 'twill be so for ever, nephew, I foresee it, for ever. Strife and tumult are the dowry that comes with a wife.
'RUE. : I told you so, sir, and you would not believe me.
IOR. : Alas, do not rub those wounds, Master Truewit, to blood again : 'twas my negligence. Add not affliction to affliction. I have perceived the effect of it, too late, in madam Otter.
PI. : How do you, sir ?
IOR. : Did you ever hear a more unnecessary question ? as if she did not see ! Why, I do as you see, empress, empress.
PI. : You are not well, sir ; you look very ill : something has distemper'd you.
IOR. : O horrible, monstrous impertinencies ! would not one of these have served, do you think, sir ? would not one of these have served ?
'RUE. : Yes, sir ; but these are but notes of female kindness, sir ; certain tokens that she has a voice, sir.
IOR. : O, is it so ! Come, an't be no otherwise——What say you ?
PI. : How do you feel yourself, sir ?
IOR. : Again that !
'RUE. : Nay, look you, sir, you would be friends with your wife upon unconscionable terms ; her silence.
PI. : They say you are run mad, sir.
IOR. : Not for love, I assure you, of you ; do you see ?
PI. : O lord, gentlemen ! lay hold on him, for God's sake. What shall I do ? who's his physician, can you tell, that knows the state of his body best, that I might send for him ? Good sir, speak ; I'll send for one of my doctors else.
IOR. : What, to poison me, that I might die intestate, and leave you possest of all !
PI. : Lord, how idly he talks, and how his eyes sparkle ! he looks green about the temples ! do you see what blue spots he has !
'LER. : Ay, 'tis melancholy.
PI. : Gentlemen, for Heaven's sake, counsel me. Ladies ;—servant, you have read Pliny and Paracelsus ; ne'er a word now to comfort a poor gentlewoman ? Ay me, what fortune had I, to marry a distracted man !
)AW : I'll tell you, mistress—
'RUE. : How rarely she holds it up ! [*Aside to* CLER.

MOR. : What mean you, gentlemen ?
EPI. : What will you tell me, servant ?
DAW : The disease in Greek is called *μανια*, in Latin *insania, furor, vel ecstasis melancholica*, that is, *egressio*, when a man *ex melancholico evadit fanaticus*.
MOR. : Shall I have a lecture read upon me alive ?
DAW : But he may be but *phreneticus* yet, mistress ; and *phrenetis* it only *delirium*, or so.
EPI. : Ay, that is for the disease, servant ; but what is this to the cure ? We are sure enough of the disease.
MOR. : Let me go.
TRUE. : Why, we'll entreat her to hold her peace, sir.
MOR. : O no, labour not to stop her. She is like a conduit-pipe, that will gush out with more force when she opens again.
HAU. : I'll tell you, Morose, you must talk divinity to him altogether, or moral philosophy.
LA-F. : Ay, and there's an excellent book of moral philosophy, madam, of Reynard the Fox, and all the beasts, called Doni's Philosophy.
CEN. : There is indeed, sir Amorous La-Foole.
MOR. : O misery !
LA-F. : I have read it, my lady Centaure, all over, to my cousin here.
MRS. OTT. : Ay, and 'tis a very good book as any is, of the moderns.
DAW : Tut, he must have Seneca read to him, and Plutarch, and the ancients ; the moderns are not for this disease.
CLER. : Why, you discommended them too, to-day, sir John.
DAW : Ay, in some cases : but in these they are best, and Aristotle's ethics.
MAV. : Say you so, sir John ? I think you are deceived ; you took it upon trust.
HAU. : Where's Trusty, my woman ? I'll end this difference. I prithee, Otter, call her. Her father and mother were both mad, when they put her to me.
MOR. : I think so.—Nay, gentlemen, I am tame. This is but an exercise, I know, a marriage ceremony, which I must endure.
HAU. : And one of them, I know not which, was cured with the Sick Man's Salve, and the other with Green's Groat's-worth of Wit.
TRUE : A very cheap cure, madam.

Enter TRUSTY.

HAU. : Ay, 'tis very feasible.
MRS. OTT. : My lady call'd for you, mistress Trusty : you must decide a controversy.
HAU. : O, Trusty, which was it you said, your father, or your mother, that was cured with the Sick Man's Salve ?
TRUS. : My mother, madam, with the Salve.
TRUE. : Then it was the sick woman's salve ?
TRUS. : And my father with the Groat's-worth of Wit. But there was other means used : we had a preacher that would preach folk asleep still ; and so they were prescribed to go to church, by an old woman that was their physician, thrice a week—
EPI. : To sleep ?
TRUS. : Yes, forsooth : and every night they read themselves asleep on those books.
EPI. : Good faith, it stands with great reason. I would I knew where to procure those books.
MOR. : Oh !
LA-F. : I can help you with one of them, mistress Morose, the Groat's-worth of Wit.

EPI. : But I shall disfurnish you, sir Amorous : can you spare it ?
LA-F. : O yes, for a week, or so ; I'll read it myself to him.
EPI. : No, I must do that, sir ; that must be my office.
MOR. : Oh, oh !
EPI. : Sure he would do well enough, if he could sleep.
MOR. : No, I should do well enough, if you could sleep. Have I no friend that will make her drunk, or give her a little laudanum or opium ?
TRUE. : Why, sir, she talks ten times worse in her sleep.
MOR. : How !
CLER. : Do you not know that, sir ? never ceases all night.
TRUE. : And snores like a porpoise.
MOR. : O redeem me, fate ; redeem me, fate ! For how many causes may a man be divorced, nephew ?
DAUP. : I know not, truly, sir.
TRUE. : Some divine must resolve you in that, sir, or canon-lawyer.
MOR. : I will not rest, I will not think of any other hope or comfort, till I know. [*Exit with* DAUPHINE.
CLER. : Alas, poor man !
TRUE. : You'll make him mad indeed, ladies, if you pursue this.
HAU. : No, we'll let him breathe now, a quarter of an hour or so.
CLER. : By my faith, a large truce !
HAU. : Is that his keeper, that is gone with him ?
DAW : It is his nephew, madam.
LA-F. : Sir Dauphine Eugenie.
CEN. : He looks like a very pitiful knight—
DAW : As can be. This marriage has put him out of all.
LA-F. : He has not a penny in his purse, madam.
DAW : He is ready to cry all this day.
LA-F. : A very shark ; he set me in the nick t'other night at Primero.
TRUE. : How these swabbers talk !
CLER. : Ay, Otter's wine has swell'd their humours above a spring-tide.
HAU. : Good Morose, let's go in again. I like your couches exceeding well ; we'll go lie and talk there.
[*Exeunt* HAU., CEN., MAV., TRUS., LA-FOOLE, *and* DAW.
EPI. (*following them*) : I wait on you, madam.
TRUE. (*stopping her*) : 'Slight, I will have them as silent as signs, and their post too, ere I have done. Do you hear, lady-bride ? I pray thee now, as thou art a noble wench, continue this discourse of Dauphine within : but praise him exceedingly : magnify him with all the height of affection thou canst ;—I have some purpose in't : and but beat off these two rooks, Jack Daw and his fellow, with any discontentment, hither, and I'll honour thee for ever.
EPI. : I was about it here. It angered me to the soul, to hear them begin to talk so malépert.
TRUE. : Pray thee perform it, and thou winn'st me an idolater to thee everlasting.
EPI. : Will you go in and hear me do't ?
TRUE. : No, I'll stay here. Drive them out of your company, 'tis all I ask ; which cannot be any way better done, than by extolling Dauphine, whom they have so slighted.
EPI. : I warrant you ; you shall expect one of them presently. [*Exit.*
CLER. : What a cast of kestrils are these, to hawk after ladies, thus !
TRUE. : Ay, and strike at such an eagle as Dauphine.
CLER. : He will be mad when we tell him. Here he comes.

Re-enter DAUPHINE.

CLER. : O sir, you are welcome.

TRUE. : Where's thine uncle ?

DAUP. : Run out of doors in his night-caps, to talk with a casuist about his divorce. It works admirably.

TRUE. : Thou wouldst have said so, an thou hadst been here ! The ladies have laugh'd at thee most comically, since thou went'st, Dauphine.

CLER. : And ask'd, if thou wert thine uncle's keeper.

TRUE. : And the brace of baboons answer'd, Yes ; and said thou wert a pitiful poor fellow, and didst live upon posts, and hadst nothing but three suits of apparel, and some few benevolences that the lords gave thee to fool to them, and swagger.

DAUP. : Let me not live, I'll beat them : I'll bind them both to grand-madam's bed-posts, and have them baited with monkies.

TRUE. : Thou shalt not need, they shall be beaten to thy hand, Dauphine. I have an execution to serve upon them, I warrant thee, shall serve ; trust my plot.

DAUP. : Ay, you have many plots ! so you had one to make all the wenches in love with me.

TRUE. : Why, if I do it not yet afore night, as near as 'tis, and that they do not every one invite thee, and be ready to scratch for thee, take the mortgage of my wit.

CLER. : 'Fore God, I'll be his witness thou shalt have it, Dauphine : thou shalt be his fool for ever, if thou dost not.

TRUE. : Agreed. Perhaps 'twill be the better estate. Do you observe this gallery, or rather lobby, indeed ? Here are a couple of studies, at each end one : here will I act such a tragi-comedy between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, Daw and La-Foole—which of them comes out first, will I seize on ;—you two shall be the chorus behind the arras, and whip out between the acts and speak —If I do not make them keep the peace for this remnant of the day, if not of the year, I have failed once——I hear Daw coming : hide, (*they withdraw*) and do not laugh, for God's sake.

Re-enter DAW.

DAW : Which is the way into the garden, trow ?

TRUE. : O, Jack Daw ! I am glad I have met with you. In good faith, I must have this matter go no further between you : I must have it taken up.

DAW : What matter, sir ? between whom ?

TRUE. : Come, you disguise it : sir Amorous and you. If you love me, Jack, you shall make use of your philosophy now, for this once, and deliver me your sword. This is not the wedding the Centaurs were at, though there be a she one here. (*Takes his sword.*) The bride has entreated me I will see no blood shed at her bridal : you saw her whisper me erewhile.

DAW : As I hope to finish Tacitus, I intend no murder.

TRUE. : Do you not wait for sir Amorous ?

DAW : Not I, by my knighthood.

TRUE. : And your scholarship too ?

DAW : And my scholarship too.

TRUE. : Go to, then I return you your sword, and ask you mercy ; but put it not up, for you will be assaulted. I understood that you had apprehended it, and walked here to brave him ; and that you had held your life contemptible, in regard of your honour.

DAW : No, no ; no such thing, I assure you. He and I parted now, as good friends as could be.

TRUE. : Trust not you to that visor. I saw him since dinner with another face : I have known many men in my time vex'd with losses, with deaths, and with abuses ; but so offended a wight as sir Amorous, did I never see or read of. For taking away his guests, sir, to-day, that's the cause ; and he declares it behind your back with such threatenings and contempts—— He said to Dauphine, you were the arrant'st ass—

DAW : Ay, he may say his pleasure.

TRUE. : And swears you are so protested a coward, that he knows you will never do him any manly or single right ; and therefore he will take his course.

DAW : I'll give him any satisfaction, sir—but fighting.

TRUE. : Ay, sir : but who knows what satisfaction he'll take : blood he thirsts for, and blood he will have ; and whereabouts on you he will have it, who knows but himself ?

DAW : I pray you, Master Truewit, be you a mediator.

TRUE. : Well, sir, conceal yourself then in this study till I return. (*Puts him into the study.*) Nay, you must be content to be lock'd in ; for, for mine own reputation, I would not have you seen to receive a public disgrace, while I have the matter in managing. Ods so, here he comes ; keep your breath close, that he do not hear you sigh.—In good faith, sir Amorous, he is not this way ; I pray you be merciful, do not murder him ; he is a Christian, as good as you : you are arm'd as if you sought revenge on all his race. Good Dauphine, get him away from this place. I never knew a man's choler so high, but he would speak to his friends, he would hear reason.—Jack Daw, Jack ! asleep !

DAW (within) : Is he gone, master Truewit ?

TRUE. : Ay ; did you hear him ?

DAW : O lord ! yes.

TRUE. : What a quick ear fear has !

DAW (*comes out of the closet*) : But is he so arm'd, as you say ?

TRUE. : Arm'd ! did you ever see a fellow set out to take possession ?

DAW : Ay, sir.

TRUE. : That may give you some light to conceive of him ; but 'tis nothing to the principal. Some false brother in the house has furnish'd him strangely ; or, if it were out of the house, it was Tom Otter.

DAW : Indeed he's a captain, and his wife is his kinswoman.

TRUE. : He has got some body's old two-hand sword, to mow you off at the knees ; and that sword hath spawn'd such a dagger !—But then he is so hung with pikes, halberds, petronels, calivers and muskets, that he looks like a justice of peace's hall ; a man of two thousand a-year is not cess'd at so many weapons as he has on. There was never fencer challenged at so many several foils. You would think he meant to murder all St. Pulchre parish. If he could but victual himself for half a-year in his breeches, he is sufficiently arm'd to over-run a country.

DAW : Good lord ! what means he, sir ? I pray you, master Truewit, be you a mediator.

TRUE. : Well, I'll try if he will be appeased with a leg or an arm ; if not you must die once.

DAW : I would be loth to lose my right arm, for writing madrigals.

TRUE. : Why, if he will be satisfied with a thumb or a little finger, all's one to me. You must think, I'll do my best. [*Shuts him up again.*

DAW : Good sir, do. [CLERIMONT *and* DAUPHINE *come forward.*

CLER. : What hast thou done ?

TRUE. : He will let me do nothing, he does all afore ; he offers his left arm.

CLER. : His left wing for a Jack Daw.

DAUP. : Take it by all means.

TRUE. : How ! maim a man for ever, for a jest ? What a conscience hast thou !

DAUP. : 'Tis no loss to him ; he has no employment for his arms, but to eat spoon-meat. Beside, as good maim his body as his reputation.

TRUE. : He is a scholar and a wit, and yet he does not think so. But he loses no reputation with us ; for we all resolved him an ass before. To your places again.

CLER. : I pray thee, let be me in at the other a little.

TRUE. : Look, you'll spoil all ; these be ever your tricks.

CLER. : No, but I could hit of some things that thou wilt miss, and thou wilt say are good ones.

TRUE. : I warrant you. I pray forbear, I'll leave it off, else.

DAUP. : Come away, Clerimont. [DAUP. *and* CLER. *withdraw as before.*

Enter LA-FOOLE.

TRUE. : Sir Amorous !

LA-F. : Master Truewit.

TRUE. : Whither were you going ?

LA-F. : Down into the court to make water.

TRUE. : By no means, sir ; you shall rather tempt your breeches.

LA-F. : Why, sir ?

TRUE. : Enter here, if you love your life. [*Opening the door of the other study.*

LA-F. : Why ? why ?

TRUE. : Question till your throat be cut, do : dally till the enraged soul find you.

LA-F. : Who is that ?

TRUE. : Daw it is : will you in ?

LA-F. : Ay, ay, I'll in : what's the matter ?

TRUE. : Nay, if he had been cool enough to tell us that, there had been some hope to atone you ; but he seems so implacably enraged !

LA-F. : 'Slight, let him rage ! I'll hide myself.

TRUE. : Do, good sir. But what have you done to him within, that should provoke him thus ? You have broken some jest upon him afore the ladies.

LA-F. : Not I, never in my life, broke jest upon any man. The bride was praising sir Dauphine, and he went away in snuff, and I followed him ; unless he took offence at me in his drink erewhile, that I would not pledge all the horse full.

TRUE. : By my faith, and that may be ; you remember well : but he walks the round up and down, through every room o' the house, with a towel in his hand, crying, *Where's La-Foole ? Who saw La-Foole ?* And when Dauphine and I demanded the cause, we can force no answer from him, but—*O revenge, how sweet art thou ! I will strangle him in this towel*—which leads us to conjecture that the main cause of his fury is, for bringing your meat to-day, with a towel about you, to his discredit.

LA-F. : Like enough. Why, an he be angry for that, I'll stay here till his anger be blown over.

TRUE. : A good becoming resolution, sir ; if you can put it on o' the sudden.

LA-F. : Yes, I can put it on : or, I'll away into the country presently.

TRUE. : How will you go out of the house, sir ? he knows you are in the house, and he'll watch this se'ennight, but he'll have you : he'll outwait a serjeant for you.

LA-F. : Why, then I'll stay here.

RUE. : You must think how to vitual yourself in time then.
A-F. : Why, sweet Master Truewit, will you entreat my cousin Otter to send me a cold venison pasty, a bottle or two of wine, and a chamber-pot?
RUE. : A stool were better, sir, of sir Ajax his invention.
A-F. : Ay, that will be better, indeed ; and a pallat to lie on.
RUE. : O, I would not advise you to sleep by any means.
A-F. : Would you not, sir? Why, then I will not.
RUE. : Yet, there's another fear—
A-F. : Is there ! what is't?
RUE. : No, he cannot break open this door with his foot, sure.
A-F. : I'll set my back against it, sir. I have a good back.
RUE. : But then if he should batter.
A-F. : Batter ! if he dare, I'll have an action of battery against him.
RUE. : Cast you the worst. He has sent for powder already, and what he will do with it, no man knows : perhaps blow up the corner of the house where he suspects you are. Here he comes ; in quickly. (*Thrusts in* LA-FOOLE *and shuts the door.*)—I protest, sir John Daw, he is not this way : what will you do? Before God, you shall hang no petard here : I'll die rather. Will you not take my word? I never knew one but would be satisfied.—Sir Amorous (*speaks through the key-hole*), there's no standing out : he has made a petard of an old brass pot, to force your door. Think upon some satisfaction, or terms to offer him.
A-F. (*within*) : Sir, I'll give him any satisfaction : I dare give any terms.
RUE. : You'll leave it to me then?
A-F. : Ay, sir : I'll stand to any conditions.
RUE. (*beckoning forward* CLER. *and* DAUP.) : How now, what think you, sirs? were't not a difficult thing to determine which of these two fear'd most?
LER. : Yes, but this fears the bravest : The other a whiniling dastard, Jack Daw ! But La-Foole, a brave heroic coward ! and is afraid in a great look and a stout accent ; I like him rarely.
RUE. : Had it not been pity these two should have been concealed?
LER. : Shall I make a motion?
RUE. : Briefly : for I must strike while 'tis hot.
LER. : Shall I go fetch the ladies to the catastrophe?
RUE. : Umph ! ay, by my troth.
AUP. : By no mortal means. Let them continue in the state of ignorance, and err still ; think them wits and fine fellows, as they have done. 'Twere sin to reform them.
RUE : Well, I will have them fetch'd, now I think on't, for a private purpose of mine : do, Clerimont, fetch them, and discourse to them all that's past, and bring them into the gallery here.
AUP. : This is thy extreme vanity, now : thou think'st thou wert undone, if every jest thou mak'st were not published.
RUE. : Thou shalt see how unjust thou art presently. Clerimont, say it was Dauphine's plot. (*Exit* CLERIMONT.) Trust me not, if the whole drift be not for thy good. There is a carpet in the next room, put it on, with this scarf over thy face, and a cushion on thy head, and be ready when I call Amorous. Away ! (*Exit* DAUP.) John Daw !

[*Goes to* DAW's *closet and brings him out.*

AW : What good news, sir?
RUE. : Faith, I have followed and argued with him hard for you. I told him you were a knight, and a scholar, and that you knew fortitude did consist *magis patiendo quam faciendo, magis ferendo quam feriendo.*

DAW : It doth so indeed, sir.

TRUE. : And that you would suffer, I told him : so at first he demanded by my troth, in my conceit, too much.

DAW : What was it, sir ?

TRUE. : Your upper lip, and six of your fore-teeth.

DAW : 'Twas unreasonable.

TRUE. : Nay, I told him plainly, you could not spare them all. So after long argument *pro et con.* as you know, I brought him down to your two butter-teeth, and them he would have.

DAW : O, did you so ? Why, he shall have them.

TRUE. : But he shall not, sir, by your leave. The conclusion is this, sir : because you shall be very good friends hereafter, and this never to be remembered or upbraided ; besides, that he may not boast he has done any such thing to you in his own person ; he is to come here in disguise, give you five kicks in private, sir, take your sword from you, and lock you up in that study during pleasure : which will be but a little while, we'll get it released presently.

DAW : Five kicks ! he shall have six, sir, to be friends.

TRUE. : Believe me, you shall not over-shoot yourself, to send him that word by me.

DAW : Deliver it, sir ; he shall have it with all my heart, to be friends.

TRUE. : Friends ! Nay, an he should not be so, and heartily too, upon these terms, he shall have me to enemy while I live. Come, sir, bear it bravely.

DAW : O lord, sir, 'tis nothing.

TRUE. : True : what's six kicks to a man that reads Seneca ?

DAW : I have had a hundred, sir.

TRUE. : Sir Amorous !

Re-enter DAUPHINE, *disguised.*

No speaking one to another, or rehearsing old matter.

DAW (*as* DAUP. *kicks him*) : One, two, three, four, five. I protest, sir Amorous, you shall have six.

TRUE. : Nay, I told you, you should not talk. Come give him six, an he will needs. (DAUPHINE *kicks him again.*)—Your sword. (*Takes his sword.*) Now return to your safe custody ; you shall presently meet afore the ladies, and be the dearest friends one to another. (*Puts* DAW *into the study.*)—Give me the scarf now, thou shalt beat the other bare-faced. Stand by : (DAUPHINE *retires, and* TRUEWIT *goes to the other closet, and releases* LA-FOOLE.)—Sir Amorous !

LA-F. : What's here ! A sword ?

TRUE. : I cannot help it, without I should take the quarrel upon myself. Here he has sent you his sword—

LA-F. : I'll receive none on't.

TRUE. : And he wills you to fasten it against a wall, and break your head in some few several places against the hilts.

LA-F. : I will not : tell him roundly. I cannot endure to shed my own blood.

TRUE. : Will you not ?

LA-F. : No. I'll beat it against a fair flat wall, if that will satisfy him : if not, he shall beat it himself, for Amorous.

TRUE. : Why, this is strange starting off, when a man undertakes for you ! I offer'd him another condition ; will you stand to that ?

LA-F. : Ay, what is't ?

TRUE. : That you will be beaten in private.

LA-F. : Yes, I am content, at the blunt.

Enter, above, HAUGHTY, CENTAURE, MAVIS, MISTRESS OTTER, EPICŒNE, *and* TRUSTY.

TRUE. : Then you must submit yourself to be hoodwinked in this scarf, and be led to him, where he will take your sword from you, and make you bear a blow over the mouth, gules, and tweaks by the nose *sans nombre*.

LA-F. : I am content. But why must I be blinded ?

TRUE. : That's for your good, sir : because, if he should grow insolent upon this, and publish it hereafter to your disgrace, (which I hope he will not do,) you might swear safely, and protest, he never beat you, to your knowledge.

LA-F. : O, I conceive.

TRUE. : I do not doubt but you'll be perfect good friends upon't, and not dare to utter an ill thought one of another in future.

LA-F. : Not I, as God help me, of him.

TRUE. : Nor he of you, sir. If he should, (*binds his eyes.*)—Come, sir (*leads him forward.*)—*All hid,* Sir John !

Enter DAUPHINE, *and tweaks him by the nose.*

LA-F. : O, sir John, sir John ! Oh, o-o-o-o-o-Oh—

TRUE, : Good sir John, leave tweaking, you'll blow his nose off.—'Tis sir John's pleasure, you should retire into the study. (*Puts him up again.*)—Why, now you are friends. All bitterness between you, I hope, is buried ; you shall come forth by and by, Damon and Pythias upon't, and embrace with all the rankness of friendship that can be.—I trust, we shall have them tamer in their language hereafter. Dauphine, I worship thee.—God's will, the ladies have surprised us !

Enter HAUGHTY, CENTAURE, MAVIS, MISTRESS OTTER, EPICŒNE, *and* TRUSTY, *behind.*

HAU. : Centaure, how our judgments were imposed on by these adulterate knights !

CEN. : Nay, madam, Mavis was more deceived than we ; 'twas her commendation utter'd them in the college.

MAV. : I commended but their wits, madam, and their braveries. I never look'd toward their valours.

HAU. : Sir Dauphine is valiant, and a wit too, it seems.

MAV. : And a bravery too.

HAU. : Was this his project ?

MRS. OTT. : So Master Clerimont intimates, madam.

HAU. : Good Morose, when you come to the college, will you bring him with you ? he seems a very perfect gentleman.

EPI. : He is so, madam, believe it.

CEN. : But when will you come, Morose ?

EPI. : Three or four days hence, madam, when I have got me a coach and horses.

HAU. : No, to-morrow, good Morose ; Centaure shall send you her coach.

MAV. : Yes faith, do, and bring sir Dauphine with you.

HAU. : She has promised that, Mavis.

MAV. : He is a very worthy gentleman in his exteriors, madam.

HAU. : Ay, he shews he is judicial in his clothes.

CEN. : And yet not so superlatively neat as some, madam, that have their faces set in a brake.

HAU. : Ay, and have every hair in form.

MAV. : That wear purer linen than ourselves, and profess more neatness than the French hermaphrodite !

EPI. : Ay, ladies, they, what they tell one of us, have told a thousand ; and are the only thieves of our fame, but think to take us with that perfume, or with that lace, and laugh at us unconscionably when they have done.

HAU. : But sir Dauphine's carelessness becomes him.

CEN. : I could love a man for such a nose.

MAV. : Or such a leg.

CEN. : He has an exceeding good eye, madam.

MAV. : And a very good lock.

CEN. : Good Morose, bring him to my chamber first.

MRS. OTT. : Please your honours to meet at my house, madam.

TRUE. : See how they eye thee, man ! they are taken, I warrant thee.

[HAUGHTY *comes forward.*

HAU. : You have unbraced our brace of knights here, Master Truewit.

TRUE. : Not I, madam ; it was sir Dauphine's ingine : who, if he have disfurnish'd your ladyship of any guard or service by it, is able to make the place good again in himself.

HAU. : There is no suspicion of that, sir.

CEN. : God so, Mavis, Haughty is kissing.

MAV. : Let us go too, and take part. [*They come forward.*

HAU. : But I am glad of the fortune (beside the discovery of two such empty caskets) to gain the knowledge of so rich a mine of virtue as Sir Dauphine.

CEN. : We would be all glad to style him of our friendship, and see him at the college.

MAV. : He cannot mix with a sweeter society, I'll prophesy ; and I hope he himself will think so.

DAUP. : I should be rude to imagine otherwise, lady.

TRUE. : Did not I tell thee, Dauphine ! Why, all their actions are governed by crude opinion, without reason or cause ; they know not why they do any thing ; but, as they are inform'd, believe, judge, praise, condemn, love, hate, and in emulation one of another, do all these things alike. Only they have a natural inclination sways them generally to the worst, when they are left to themselves. But pursue it, now thou hast them.

HAU. : Shall we go in again, Morose ?

EPI. : Yes, madam.

CEN. : We'll entreat sir Dauphine's company.

TRUE. : Stay, good madam, the interview of the two friends, Pylades and Orestes : I'll fetch them out to you straight.

HAU. : Will you, Master Truewit ?

DAUP. : Ay, but noble ladies, do not confess in your countenance, or outward bearing to them, any discovery of their follies, that we may see how they will bear up again, with what assurance and erection.

HAU. : We will not, sir Dauphine.

CEN. MAV. : Upon our honours, sir Dauphine.

TRUE (*goes to the first closet*) : Sir Amorous, sir Amorous ! The ladies are here.

LA-F. (*within*) : Are they ?

TRUE. : Yes ; but slip out by and by, as their backs are turn'd, and meet sir John here, as by chance, when I call you. (*Goes to the other.*)—Jack Daw.

DAW (*within*) : What say you, sir ?

TRUE. : Whip out behind me suddenly, and no anger in your looks to your adversary. Now, now !

[LA-FOOLE *and* DAW *slip out of their respective closets, and salute each other.*

LA-F. : Noble sir John Daw, where have you been ?

DAW : To seek you, sir Amorous.

LA-F. : Me ! I honour you.

DAW : I prevent you, sir.
CLER. : They have forgot their rapiers.
TRUE. : O, they meet in peace, man.
DAUP. : Where's your sword, sir John ?
CLER. : And yours, sir Amorous ?
DAW : Mine ! my boy had it forth to mend the handle, e'en now.
LA-F. : And my gold handle was broke too, and my boy had it forth.
DAUP. : Indeed, sir!—How their excuses meet !
CLER. : What a consent there is in the handles !
TRUE. : Nay, there is so in the points too, I warrant you.

Enter MOROSE, *with the two swords, drawn in his hands.*

MRS. OTT. : O me ! madam, he comes again, the madman ! Away !
[LADIES, DAW, *and* LA-FOOLE, *run off.*
MOR. : What make these naked weapons here, gentlemen ?
TRUE. : O sir ! here hath like to have been murder since you went; a couple of knights fallen out about the bride's favours ! We were fain to take away their weapons ; your house had been begg'd by this time else.
MOR. : For what ?
CLER. : For manslaughter, sir, as being accessary.
MOR. : And for her favours ?
TRUE. : Ay, sir, heretofore, not present—Clerimont, carry them their swords now. They have done all the hurt they will do. [*Exit* CLER. *with the two swords.*
DAUP. : Have you spoke with the lawyer, sir ?
MOR. : O no ! there is such a noise in the court, that they have frighted me home with more violence than I went ! such speaking and counter-speaking, with their several voices of citations, appellations, allegations, certificates, attachments, intergatories, references, convictions, and afflictions indeed, among the doctors and proctors, that the noise here is silence to't, a kind of calm midnight !
TRUE. : Why, sir, if you would be resolved indeed, I can bring you hither a very sufficient lawyer, and a learned divine, that shall enquire into every least scruple for you.
MOR. : Can you, master Truewit ?
TRUE. : Yes, and are very sober, grave persons, that will dispatch it in a chamber, with a whisper or two.
MOR. : Good, sir, shall I hope this benefit from you, and trust myself into your hands ?
TRUE. : Alas, sir ! your nephew and I have been ashamed and oft-times mad, since you went, to think how you are abused. Go in, good sir, and lock yourself up till we call you ; we'll tell you more anon, sir.
MOR. : Do your pleasure with me, gentlemen ; I believe in you, and that deserves no delusion. [*Exit.*
TRUE. : You shall find none, sir ;—but heap'd, heap'd plenty of vexation.
DAUP. : What wilt thou do now, Wit ?
TRUE. : Recover me hither Otter and the barber, if you can, by any means, presently.
DAUP. : Why ? to what purpose ?
TRUE. : O, I'll make the deepest divine, and gravest lawyer, out of them two for him—
DAUP : Thou canst not, man ; these are waking dreams.
TRUE. : Do not fear me. Clap but a civil gown with a welt on the one, and a canonical cloke with sleeves on the other, and give them a few terms in their

mouths, if there come not forth as able a doctor and complete a parson, for this turn, as may be wish'd, trust not my election : and I hope, without wronging the dignity of either profession, since they are but persons put on, and for mirth's sake, to torment him. The barber smatters Latin, I remember.

DAUP. : Yes, and Otter too.

TRUE. : Well then, if I make them not wrangle out this case to his no comfort, let me be thought a Jack Daw or La-Foole or anything worse. Go you to your ladies, but first send for them.

DAUP. : I will. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—*A Room in* MOROSE'S *House.*

Enter LA-FOOLE, CLERIMONT, *and* DAW.

LA-F. : Where had you our swords, Master Clerimont ?

CLER. : Why, Dauphine took them from the madman.

LA-F. : And he took them from our boys, I warrant you.

CLER. : Very like, sir.

LA-F. : Thank you, good master Clerimont. Sir John Daw and I are both beholden to you.

CLER. : Would I knew how to make you so, gentlemen !

DAW : Sir Amorous and I are your servants, sir.

Enter MAVIS.

MAV. : Gentlemen, have any of you a pen and ink ? I would fain write out a riddle in Italian, for sir Dauphine to translate.

CLER. : Not I, in troth, lady ; I am no scrivener.

DAW : I can furnish you, I think, lady. [*Exeunt* DAW *and* MAVIS.

CLER. : He has it in the haft of a knife, I believe.

LA-F. : No, he has his box of instruments.

CLER. : Like a surgeon !

LA-F. : For the mathematics : his square, his compasses, his brass pens, and black-lead, to draw maps of every place and person where he comes.

CLER. : How, maps of persons !

LA-F. : Yes, sir, of Nomentack when he was here, and of the Prince of Moldavia, and of his mistress, mistress Epicœne.

Re-enter DAW.

CLER. : Away ! he hath not found out her latitude, I hope.

LA-F. : You are a pleasant gentleman, sir.

CLER. : Faith, now we are in private, let's wanton it a little, and talk waggishly. —Sir John, I am telling sir Amorous here, that you two govern the ladies wherever you come ; you carry the feminine gender afore you.

DAW : They shall rather carry us afore them, if they will, sir.

CLER. : Nay, I believe that they do, withal—but that you are the prime men in their affections, and direct all their actions—

DAW : Not I ; sir Amorous is.

LA-F. : I protest, sir John is.

DAW : As I hope to rise in the state, Sir Amorous, you have the person.

LA-F. : Sir John, you have the person, and the discourse too.

DAW : Not I, sir. I have no discourse—and then you have activity beside.

LA-F. : I protest, sir John, you come as high from Tripoly as I do, every whit : and lift as many join'd stools, and leap over them, if you would use it.

CLER. : Well, agree on't together, knights ; for between you, you divide the

kingdom or commonwealth of ladies' affections : I see it, and can perceive a little how they observe you, and fear you, indeed. You could tell strange stories, my masters, if you would, I know.

DAW : Faith, we have seen somewhat, sir.

LA-F. : That we have—velvet petticoats, and wrought smocks, or so.

DAW : Ay, and——

CLER. : Nay, out with it, sir John ; do not envy your friend the pleasure of hearing, when you have had the delight of tasting.

DAW : Why—a——Do you speak, sir Amorous.

LA-F. : No, do you, sir John Daw.

DAW : I'faith, you shall.

LA-F. : I'faith, you shall.

DAW : Why, we have been—

LA-F. : In the great bed at Ware together in our time. On, sir John.

DAW : Nay, do you, sir Amorous.

CLER. : And these ladies with you, knights ?

LA-F. : No, excuse us, sir.

DAW : We must not wound reputation.

LA-F. : No matter—they were these, or others. Our bath cost us fifteen pound when we came home.

CLER. : Do you hear, sir John ? You shall tell me but one thing truly, as you love me.

DAW. : If I can, I will, sir.

CLER. : You lay in the same house with the bride here ?

DAW : Yes, and conversed with her hourly, sir.

CLER. : And what humour is she of ? Is she coming and open, free ?

DAW : O, exceeding open, sir. I was her servant, and sir Amorous was to be.

CLER. : Come, you have both had favours from her : I know, and have heard so much.

DAW : O no, sir.

LA-F. : You shall excuse us, sir ; we must not wound reputation.

CLER. : Tut, she is married now, and you cannot hurt her with any report ; and therefore speak plainly : how many times, i' faith ? which of you led first ? ha !

LA-F. : Sir John had her maidenhead, indeed.

DAW : O, it pleases him to say so, sir ; but sir Amorous knows what's what, as well.

CLER. : Dost thou, i'faith, Amorous ?

LA-F. : In a manner, sir.

CLER. : Why, I commend you lads. Little knows don Bridegroom of this ; nor shall he, for me.

DAW : Hang him, mad ox !

CLER. : Speak softly ; here comes his nephew, with the lady Haughty : he'll get the ladies from you, sirs, if you look not to him in time.

LA-F. : Why, if he do, we'll fetch them home again, I warrant you.

[*Exit with* DAW. CLER. *walks aside.*

Enter DAUPHINE *and* HAUGHTY.

HAU. : I assure you, sir Dauphine, it is the price and estimation of your virtue only, that hath embark'd me to this adventure ; and I could not but make out to tell you so : nor can I repent me of the act, since it is always an argument of some virtue in our selves, that we love and affect it so in others.

DAUP. : Your ladyship sets too high a price on my weakness.

HAU. : Sir, I can distinguish gems from pebbles—

DAUP. : Are you so skilful in stones? [*Aside.*

HAU. : And howsoever I may suffer in such a judgment as yours, by admitting equality of rank or society with Centaure or Mavis—

DAUP. : You do not, madam ; I perceive they are your mere foils.

HAU. : Then, are you a friend to truth, sir ; it makes me love you the more. It is not the outward, but the inward man that I affect. They are not apprehensive of an eminent perfection, but love flat and dully.

CEN. (*within*) : Where are you, my lady Haughty?

HAU. : I come presently, Centaure.—My chamber, sir, my page shall shew you ; and Trusty, my woman, shall be ever awake for you : you need not fear to communicate anything with her, for she is a Fidelia. I pray you wear this jewel for my sake, sir Dauphine—

Enter CENTAURE.

Where's Mavis, Centaure?

CEN. : Within, madam, a writing. I'll follow you presently : (*Exit* HAU.) I'll but speak a word with sir Dauphine.

DAUP. : With me, madam?

CEN. : Good sir Dauphine, do not trust Haughty, nor make any credit to her whatever you do besides. Sir Dauphine, I give you this caution, she is a perfect courtier, and loves nobody but for her uses ; and for her uses she loves all. Besides, her physicians give her out to be none o' the clearest, whether she pay them or no, heaven knows ; and she's above fifty too, and pargets! See her in a forenoon. Here comes Mavis, a worse face than she! you would not like this by candle-light.

Re-enter MAVIS.

If you'll come to my chamber one o' these mornings early, or late in an evening, I'll tell you more. Where's Haughty, Mavis?

MAV. : Within, Centaure.

CEN. : What have you there?

MAV. : An Italian riddle for sir Dauphine,—you shall not see it, i'faith, Centaure.—(*Exit* CEN.) Good sir Dauphine, solve it for me : I'll call for it anon. [*Exit.*

CLER. (*coming forward*) : How now, Dauphine! how dost thou quit thyself of these females?

DAUP. : 'Slight, they haunt me like fairies, and give me jewels here ; I cannot be rid of them.

CLER. : O, you must not tell though.

DAUP. : Mass, I forgot that : I was never so assaulted. One loves for virtue, and bribes me with this ; (*shews the jewel.*)—another loves me with caution, and so would possess me ; a third brings me a riddle here : and all are jealous, and rail each at other.

CLER. : A riddle! pray let me see it. [*Reads.*

"SIR DAUPHINE : I chose this way of intimation for privacy. The ladies here, I know, have both hope and purpose to make a collegiate and servant of you. If I might be so honoured, as to appear at any end of so noble a work, I would enter into a fame of taking physic to-morrow, and continue it four or five days, or longer, for your visitation. MAVIS."

By my faith, a subtle one! Call you this a riddle? what's their plain-dealing, trow?

DAUP. : We lack Truewit to tell us that.

CLER. : We lack him for somewhat else too : his knights reformadoes are wound up as high and insolent as ever they were.

DAUP. : You jest.

CLER. : No drunkards, either with wine or vanity, ever confess'd such stories of themselves. I would not give a fly's leg in balance against all the women's reputations here, if they could be but thought to speak truth : and for the bride, they have made their affidavit against her directly—

DAUP. : What, that they have lain with her ?

CLER. : Yes ; and tell times and circumstances, with the cause why, and the place where. I had almost brought them to affirm that they had done it to-day.

DAUP. : Not both of them ?

CLER. : Yes, faith ; with a sooth or two more I had effected it. They would have set it down under their hands.

DAUP. : Why, they will be our sport, I see, still, whether we will or no.

Enter TRUEWIT.

TRUE. : O, are you here ? Come, Dauphine ; go call your uncle presently : I have fitted my divine and my canonist, dyed their beards and all. The knaves do not know themselves, they are so exalted and altered. Preferment changes any man. Thou shalt keep one door and I another, and then Clerimont in the midst, that he may have no means of escape from their cavilling, when they grow hot once again. And then the women, as I have given the bride her instructions, to break in upon him in the l'envoy. O, 'twill be full and twanging ! Away ! fetch him. [*Exit* DAUPHINE.

Enter OTTER *disguised as a divine, and* CUTBEARD *as a canon lawyer.*

Come, master doctor, and master parson, look to your parts now, and discharge them bravely ; you are well set forth, perform it as well. If you chance to be out, do not confess it with standing still, or humming, or gaping one at another ; but go on, and talk aloud and eagerly ; use vehement action, and only remember your terms, and you are safe. Let the matter go where it will : you have many will do so. But at first be very solemn and grave, like your garments, though you loose your selves after, and skip out like a brace of jugglers on a table. Here he comes : set your faces, and look superciliously, while I present you.

Re-enter DAUPHINE *with* MOROSE.

MOR. : Are these the two learned men ?

TRUE. : Yes, sir ; please you salute them.

MOR. : Salute them ! I had rather do anything, than wear out time so unfruitfully, sir. I wonder how these common forms, as *God save you*, and *You are welcome*, are come to be a habit in our lives : or, *I am glad to see you !* when I cannot see what the profit can be of these words, so long as it is no whit better with him whose affairs are sad and grievous, that he hears this salutation.

TRUE. : 'Tis true, sir ; we'll go to the matter then.—Gentlemen, master doctor, and master parson, I have acquainted you sufficiently with the business for which you are come hither ; and you are not now to inform yourselves in the state of the question, I know. This is the gentleman who expects your resolution, and therefore, when you please, begin.

OTT. : Please you, master doctor.

CUT. : Please you, good master parson.

OTT. : I would hear the canon-law speak first.

CUT. : It must give place to positive divinity, sir.

MOR. : Nay, good gentlemen, do not throw me into circumstances. Let your comforts arrive quickly at me, those that are. Be swift in affording me my peace, if so I shall hope any. I love not your disputations, or your court-tumults. And that it be not strange to you, I will tell you : My father, in my education, was wont to advise me, that I should always collect and contain my mind, not suffering it to flow loosely ; that I should look to what things were necessary to the carriage of my life, and what not ; embracing the one and eschewing the other ; in short, that I should endear myself to rest, and avoid turmoil ; which now is grown to be another nature to me. So that I come not to your public pleadings, or your places of noise ; not that I neglect those things that make for the dignity of the commonwealth ; but for the mere avoiding of clamours and impertinences of orators, that know not how to be silent. And for the cause of noise, am I now a suitor to you. You do not know in what a misery I have been exercised this day, what a torrent of evil ! my very house turns round with the tumult ! I dwell in a windmill : the perpetual motion is here, and not at Eltham.

TRUE. : Well, good master doctor, will you break the ice? master parson will wade after.

CUT. : Sir, though unworthy, and the weaker, I will presume.

OTT. : 'Tis no presumption, *domine* doctor.

MOR. : Yet again !

CUT. : Your question is, For how many causes a man may have *divortium legitimum*, a lawful divorce? First, you must understand the nature of the word, divorce, *à divertendo*—

MOR. : No excursions upon words, good doctor ; to the question briefly.

CUT. : I answer then, the canon law affords divorce but in few cases ; and the principal is in the common case, the adulterous case : But there are *duodecim impedimenta*, twelve impediments, as we call them, all which do not *dirimere contractum*, but *irritum reddere matrimonium*, as we say in the canon law, *not take away the bond, but cause a nullity therein.*

MOR. : I understood you before : good sir, avoid your impertinency of translation.

OTT : He cannot open this too much, sir, by your favour.

MOR. : Yet more !

TRUE. : O, you must give the learned men leave, sir,—To your impediments, master doctor.

CUT. : The first is *impedimentum erroris.*

OTT. : Of which there are several species.

CUT. : Ay, as *error personæ.*

OTT. : If you contract yourself to one person, thinking her another.

CUT. : Then, *error fortunæ.*

OTT. : If she be a beggar, and you thought her rich.

CUT. : Then, *error qualitatis.*

OTT. : If she prove stubborn or head-strong, that you thought obedient.

MOR. : How ! is that, sir, a lawful impediment? One at once, I pray you, gentlemen.

OTT. : Ay, *ante copulam*, but not *post copulam*, sir.

CUT. : Master parson says right. *Nec post nuptiarum benedictionem.* It doth indeed but *irrita reddere sponsalia*, annul the contract ; after marriage it is of no obstancy.

TRUE. : Alas, sir, what a hope are we fallen from by this time !

UT. : The next is *conditio :* if you thought her free born, and she prove a bondwoman, there is impediment of estate and condition.
TT. : Ay, but, master doctor, those servitudes are *sublatæ* now, among us Christians.
TT. : By your favour, master parson—
TT. : You shall give me leave, master doctor.
OR. : Nay, gentlemen, quarrel not in that question ; it concerns not my case : pass to the third.
UT. : Well then, the third is *votum :* if either party have made a vow of chastity. But that practice, as master parson said of the other, is taken away among us, thanks be to discipline. The fourth is *cognatio ;* if the persons be of kin within the degrees.
TT. : Ay : do you know what the degrees are, sir ?
OR. : No, nor I care not, sir ; they offer me no comfort in the question, I am sure.
UT. : But there is a branch of this impediment may, which is *cognatio spiritualis :* if you were her godfather, sir, then the marriage is incestuous.
TT. : That comment is absurd and superstitious, master doctor : I cannot endure it. Are we not all brothers and sisters, and as much akin in that, as godfather and god-daughters ?
OR. : O me ! to end the controversy, I never was a godfather, I never was a godfather in my life, sir. Pass to the next.
UT. : The fifth is *crimen adulterii ;* the known case. The sixth, *cultus disparitas,* difference of religion : Have you ever examined her, what religion she is of ?
OR. : No, I would rather she were of none, than be put to the trouble of it.
TT. : You may have it done for you, sir.
OR. : By no means, good sir ; on to the rest : shall you ever come to an end, think you ?
RUE. : Yes, he has done half, sir. On to the rest.—Be patient, and expect, sir.
UT. : The seventh is *vis :* if it were upon compulsion or force.
OR. : O no, it was too voluntary, mine ; too voluntary.
UT. : The eighth is, *ordo ;* if ever she have taken holy orders.
TT. : That's superstitious too.
OR. : No matter, master parson ; Would she would go into a nunnery yet.
UT. : The ninth is, *ligamen ;* if you were bound, sir, to any other before.
OR. : I thrust myself too soon into these fetters.
UT. : The tenth is, *publica honestas ;* which is *inchoata quædam affinitas.*
TT. : Ay, or *affinitas orta ex sponsalibus ;* and is but *leve impedimentum.*
OR. : I feel no air of comfort blowing to me, in all this.
UT. : The eleventh is, *affinitas ex fornicatione.*
TT. : Which is no less *vera affinitas,* than the other, master doctor.
UT. : True, *quæ oritur ex legitimo matrimonio.*
TT. : You say right, venerable doctor : and, *nascitur ex eo, quod per conjugium duæ personæ efficiuntur una caro*—
RUE. : Hey-day, now they begin !
UT. : I conceive you, master parson : *ita per fornicationem æque est verus pater, qui sic generat*—
TT. : *Et vere filius qui sic generatur*—
OR : What's all this to me ?
LER. : Now it grows warm.
UT. : The twelfth and last is, *si forte coire nequibus.*
TT. : Ay, that is *impedimentum gravissimum :* it doth utterly annul, and annihilate, that. If you have *manifestam frigiditatem,* you are well, sir.

TRUE. : Why, there is comfort come at length, sir. Confess yourself but a man unable, and she will sue to be divorced first.

OTT. : Ay, or if there be *morbus perpetuus, et insanabilis ;* as *paralysis, elephantiasis,* or so—

DAUP. : O, but *frigiditas* is the fairer way, gentlemen.

OTT. : You say troth, sir, and as it is in the canon, master doctor—

CUT. : I conceive you, sir.

CLER. : Before he speaks !

OTT. : That a boy, or child, under years, is not fit for marriage, because he cannot *reddere debitum.* So your *omnipotentes*—

TRUE. : Your *impotentes,* you whoreson lobster ! [*Aside to* OTT.

OTT. : Your *impotentes,* I should say, are *minime apti ad contrahenda matrimonium.*

TRUE. : *Matrimonium !* we shall have most unmatrimonial Latin with you : *matrimonia,* and be hang'd.

DAUP. : You put them out, man.

CUT. : But then there will arise a doubt, master parson, in our case, *post matrimonium :* that *frigiditate præditus*—do you conceive me, sir ?

OTT. : Very well, sir.

CUT. : Who cannot *uti uxore pro uxore,* may *habere eam pro sorore.*

OTT. : Absurd, absurd, absurd, and merely apostatical !

CUT. : You shall pardon me, master parson, I can prove it.

OTT. : You can prove a will, master doctor ; you can prove nothing else. Does not the verse of your own canon say,

Hæc socianda vetant connubia, facta retractant ?

CUT. : I grant you ; but how do they *retractare,* master parson ?

MOR. : O, this was it I feared.

OTT. : *In æternum,* sir.

CUT. : That's false in divinity, by your favour.

OTT. : 'Tis false in humanity to say so. Is he not *prorsus inutilis ad thorum ?* Can he *præstare fidem datam ?* I would fain know.

CUT. : Yes ; how if he do *convalere ?*

OTT. : He cannot *convalere,* it is impossible.

TRUE. : Nay, good sir, attend the learned men ; they'll think you neglect them else.

CUT. : Or, if he do *simulare* himself *frigidum, odio uxoris,* or so ?

OTT. : I say, he is *adulter manifestus* then.

DAUP. : They dispute it very learnedly, i'faith.

OTT. : And *prostitutor uxoris ;* and this is positive.

MOR. : Good sir, let me escape.

TRUE. : You will not do me that wrong, sir ?

OTT. : And, therefore, if he be *manifeste frigidus,* sir—

CUT. : Ay, if he be *manifeste frigidus,* I grant you—

OTT. : Why, that was my conclusion.

CUT. : And mine too.

TRUE. : Nay, hear the conclusion, sir.

OTT. : Then, *frigiditatis causa*—

CUT. : Yes, *causa frigiditatis*—

MOR. : O, mine ears !

OTT. : She may have *libellum divortii* against you.

CUT. : Ay, *divortii libellum* she will sure have.

MOR. : Good echoes, forbear.

OTT. : If you confess it.—

CUT. : Which I would do, sir—

MOR. : I will do anything.

T. : And clear myself *in foro conscientiæ*—
T. : Because you want indeed—
OR. : Yet more !
T. : *Exercendi potestate.*

ICŒNE *rushes in, followed by* HAUGHTY, CENTAURE, MAVIS, MISTRESS OTTER, DAW, *and* LA-FOOLE.

I. : I will not endure it any longer. Ladies, I beseech you, help me. This is such a wrong as never was offered to poor bride before : upon her marriage-day to have her husband conspire against her, and a couple of mercenary companions to be brought in for form's sake, to persuade a separation ! If you had blood or virtue in you, gentlemen, you would not suffer such ear-wigs about a husband, or scorpions to creep between man and wife.
OR. : O the variety and changes of my torment !
AU. : Let them be cudgell'd out of doors by our grooms.
N. : I'll lend you my footman.
AV. : We'll have our men blanket them in the hall.
RS. OTT. : As there was one at our house, madam, for peeping in at the door.
AW : Content, i'faith.
UE. : Stay, ladies and gentlemen ; you'll hear before you proceed ?
AV. : I'd have the bridegroom blanketted too.
N. : Begin with him first.
AU. : Yes, by my troth.
OR. : O mankind generation !
AUP. : Ladies, for my sake forbear.
AU. : Yes, for sir Dauphine's sake.
N. : He shall command us.
-F. : He is as fine a gentleman of his inches, madam, as any is about the town, and wears as good colours when he lists.
UE. : Be brief, sir, and confess your infirmity ; she'll be a-fire to be quit of you, if she but hear that named once, you shall not entreat her to stay : she'll dy you like one that had the marks upon him.
OR. : Ladies, I must crave all your pardons——
UE. : Silence, ladies.
OR. : For a wrong I have done to your whole sex, in marrying this fair and virtuous gentlewoman—
ER. : Hear him, good ladies.
OR. : Being guilty of an infirmity, which, before I conferred with these learned men, I thought I might have concealed—
UE. : But now being better informed in his conscience by them, he is to declare it, and give satisfaction, by asking your public forgiveness.
OR. : I am no man, ladies.
L : How !
OR. : Utterly unabled in nature, by reason of frigidity, to perform the duties, or any the least office of a husband.
AV. : Now out upon him, prodigious creature !
N. : Bridegroom uncarnate !
AU. : And would you offer it to a young gentlewoman ?
RS. OTT. : A lady of her longings ?
I. : Tut, a device, a device, this ! it smells rankly, ladies. A mere comment of his own.
UE. : Why, if you suspect that, ladies, you may have him search'd—
AW : As the custom is, by a jury of physicians.
-F. : Yes, faith, 'twill be brave.

MOR. : O me, must I undergo that ?
MRS. OTT. : No, let women search him, madam ; we can do it ourselves.
MOR. : Out on me ! worse.
EPI. : No, ladies, you shall not need, I'll take him with all his faults.
MOR. : Worst of all !
CLER. : Why then, 'tis no divorce, doctor, if she consent not ?
CUT. : No, if the man be *frigidus*, it is *de parte uxoris*, that we grant *libellum divortii*, in the law.
OTT. : Ay, it is the same in theology.
MOR. : Worse, worse than worst !
TRUE. : Nay, sir, be not utterly disheartened ; we have yet a small relic of hope left, as near as our comfort is blown out. Clerimont, produce your brace of knights. What was that, master parson, you told me *in errore qualitatis*, e'en now ?—Dauphine, whisper the bride, that she carry it as if she were guilty, and ashamed. [*Aside.*
OTT. : Marry, sir, *in errore qualitatis* (which master doctor did forbear to urge), if she be found *corrupta*, that is, vitiated or broken up, that was *pro virgine desponsa*, espoused for a maid—
MOR. : What then, sir ?
OTT. : It doth *dirimere contractum*, and *irritum reddere* too.
TRUE. : If this be true, we are happy again, sir, once more. Here are an honourable brace of knights, that shall affirm so much.
DAW : Pardon us, good master Clerimont.
LA-F. : You shall excuse us, master Clerimont.
CLER. : Nay, you must make it good now, knights, there is no remedy ; I'll eat no words for you, nor no men : you know you spoke it to me.
DAW : Is this gentleman-like, sir ?
TRUE. : Jack Daw, he's worse than sir Amorous ; fiercer a great deal (*Aside to* DAW),—Sir Amorous, beware, there be ten Daws in this Clerimont. [*Aside to* LA-FOOLE.
LA-F. : I'll confess it, sir.
DAW : Will you, sir Amorous, will you wound reputation ?
LA-F. : I am resolved.
TRUE. : So should you be too, Jack Daw : what should keep you off ? she's but a woman, and in disgrace : he'll be glad on't.
DAW : Will he ? I thought he would have been angry.
CLER. : You will dispatch, knights ; it must be done, i'faith.
TRUE. : Why, and it must, it shall, sir, they say : they'll ne'er go back.—Do not tempt his patience. [*Aside to them.*
DAW : Is it true indeed, sir ?
LA-F. : Yes, I assure you, sir.
MOR. : What is true, gentlemen ? what do you assure me ?
DAW : That we have known your bride, sir—
LA-F. : In good fashion. She was our mistress, or so—
CLER. : Nay, you must be plain, knights, as you were to me.
OTT. : Ay, the question is, if you have *carnaliter*, or no ?
LA-F. : *Carnaliter !* what else, sir ?
OTT. : It is enough, a plain nullity.
EPI. : I am undone, I am undone !
MOR. : O let me worship and adore you, gentlemen !
EPI. : I am undone. [*Weeps.*
MOR. : Yes, to my hand, I thank these knights. Master parson, let me thank you otherwise. [*Gives him money.*
CEN. : And have they confess'd ?

AV. : Now out upon them, informers !
UE. : You see what creatures you may bestow your favours on, madams.
U. : I would except against them as beaten knights, wench, and not good witnesses in law.
S. OTT. : Poor gentlewoman, how she takes it !
U. : Be comforted, Morose, I love you the better for't.
N. : So do I, I protest.
T. : But, gentlemen, you have not known her since *matrimonium ?*
W : Not to-day, master doctor.
-F. : No, sir, not to-day.
T. : Why, then I say, for any act before, the *matrimonium* is good and perfect ; unless the worshipful bridegroom did precisely, before witness, demand, if he were *virgo ante nuptias.*
I. : No, that he did not, I assure you, master doctor.
T. : If he cannot prove that, it is *ratum conjugium,* notwithstanding the premisses ; and they do no way *impedire.* And this is my sentence, this I pronounce.
T. : I am of master doctor's resolution too, sir ; if you made not that demand *nte nuptias.*
OR. : O my heart ! wilt thou break ? wilt thou break ? this is worst of all worst worsts that hell could have devised ! Marry a whore, and so much noise !
UP. : Come, I see now plain confederacy in this doctor and this parson, to abuse a gentleman. You study his affliction. I pray be gone, companions.—And, gentlemen, I begin to suspect you for having parts with them—Sir, will t please you hear me ?
OR. : O do not talk to me ; take not from me the pleasure of dying in silence, nephew.
UP. : Sir, I must speak to you. I have been long your poor despised kinsman, and many a hard thought has strengthened you against me : but now it shall appear if either I love you or your peace, and prefer them to all the world beside. I will not be long or grievous to you, sir. If I free you of this unhappy match absolutely, and instantly, after all this trouble, and almost in your despair, now—
OR. : It cannot be.
UP. : Sir, that you be never troubled with a murmur of it more, what shall I hope for, or deserve of you ?
OR. : O, what thou wilt, nephew ! thou shalt deserve me, and have me.
UP. : Shall I have your favour perfect to me, and love hereafter ?
OR. : That, and any thing beside. Make thine own conditions. My whole estate is thine ; manage it, I will become thy ward.
UP. : Nay, sir, I will not be so unreasonable.
I. : Will sir Dauphine be mine enemy too ?
UP. : You know I have been long a suitor to you, uncle, that out of your estate, which is fifteen hundred a-year, you would allow me but five hundred during life, and assure the rest upon me after ; to which I have often, by myself and friends, tendered you a writing to sign, which you would never consent or incline to. If you please but to effect it now—
OR. : Thou shalt have it, nephew : I will do it, and more.
AUP. : If I quit you not presently, and for ever, of this cumber, you shall have power instantly, afore all these, to revoke your act, and I will become whose slave you will give me to, for ever.
OR. : Where is the writing ? I will seal to it, that, or to a blank, and write thine own conditions.
I. : O me, most unfortunate, wretched gentlewoman !
AU. : Will sir Dauphine do this ?

EPI. : Good sir, have some compassion on me.

MOR. : O, my nephew knows you, belike ; away, crocodile !

CEN. : He does it not sure without good ground.

DAUP. : Here, sir. [*Gives him the parchments.*

MOR. : Come, nephew, give me the pen ; I will subscribe to any thing, and seal to what thou wilt, for my deliverance. Thou art my restorer. Here, I deliver it thee as my deed. If there be a word in it lacking, or writ with false orthography, I protest before (heaven) I will not take the advantage.

[*Returns the writings.*

DAUP. : Then here is your release, sir. (*Takes off* EPICŒNE'S *peruke and other disguises*). You have married a boy, a gentleman's son, that I have brought up this half year at my great charges, and for this composition, which I have now made with you.—What say you, master doctor ? This is *justum impedimentum*, I hope, *error personæ ?*

OTT. : Yes, sir, *in primo gradu.*

CUT. : *In primo gradu.*

DAUP. : I thank you, good doctor, Cutbeard, and parson Otter. (*Pulls their false beards and gowns off.*) You are beholden to them, sir, that have taken this pains for you ; and my friend, Master Truewit, who enabled them for the business. Now you may go in and rest ; be as private as you will, sir. (*Exit* MOROSE). I'll not trouble you, till you trouble me with your funeral, which I care not how soon it come.—Cutbeard, I'll make your lease good. *Thank me not, but with your leg, Cutbeard.* And Tom Otter, your princess shall be reconciled to you.—How now, gentlemen, do you look at me ?

CLER. : A boy !

DAUP. : Yes, Mistress Epicœne.

TRUE. : Well, Dauphine, you have lurch'd your friends of the better half of the garland, by concealing this part of the plot : but much good do it thee, thou deserv'st it, lad. And, Clerimont, for thy unexpected bringing these two to confession, wear my part of it freely. Nay, sir Daw and sir La-Foole, you see the gentlewoman that has done you the favours ! we are all thankful to you, and so should the woman-kind here, specially for lying on her, though not with her ! you meant so, I am sure. But that we have stuck it upon you to-day, in your own imagined persons, and so lately, this Amazon, the champion of the sex, should beat you now thriftily, for the common slanders which ladies receive from such cuckoos as you are. You are they that, when no merit or fortune can make you hope to enjoy their bodies, will yet lie with their reputations, and make their fame suffer. Away, you common moths of these, and all ladies' honours. Go, travel to make legs and faces, and come home with some new matter to be laugh'd at ; you deserve to live in an air as corrupted as that wherewith you feed rumour. (*Exeunt* DAW *and* LA-FOOLE.)—Madams, you are mute, upon this new metamorphosis ! But here stands she that has vindicated your fames. Take heed of such insectæ hereafter. And let it not trouble you, that you have discovered any mysteries to this young gentleman : he is almost of years, and will make a good visitant within this twelvemonth. In the mean time, we'll all undertake for his secrecy, that can speak so well of his silence. (*Coming forward.*)—*Spectators, if you like this comedy, rise cheerfully, and now Morose is gone in, clap your hands. It may be, that noise will cure him, at least please him.* [*Exeunt.*

1605

EASTWARD HO!

By BEN JONSON, GEORGE CHAPMAN, and JOHN MARSTON)

eorge Chapman was born (in Hitchin) in 1557 or 1559, and died (in ndon) in 1634. He thus lived through both the rise and the decline of the eat age. He was a friend of Marlowe's, completing, to the best of his ability, e narrative poem "Hero and Leander," at which Marlowe was working nen he died. He became a disciple of Ben Jonson's, emulating even his faults. ke his master, he was a scholar, and a pedant. The work by which he is st known is his translation of Homer. There is reason to believe that Shakes- are, who was not a scholar, did not like him. He is generally identified as e "rival poet" in the sonnets. Whether for that reason or another, we do t particularly like him. It rather gratifies us to dwell on his manifest weak- sses—his pomposity, long-windedness and obscurity; to confess that we d it difficult to read his tragedies to an end; to point out that a comic asterpiece like *The Widow's Tears* is undoubtedly marred by its brutality d fiendish cynicism. *The Silent Woman* is also brutal and fiendishly nical, but that is different. It is the work of rare Ben Jonson.

John Marston (1575?–1634), a loud and lewd person, was the principal otagonist of the anti-Jonson faction in the War of the Poets. Jonson lampoons m with incredible ferocity in his "Poetaster" (1601). Four years later the ir are collaborating with Chapman in this harmonious and delightful ondon comedy. *Eastward Ho!* was produced at Blackfriars in 1605, and sulted in the arrest and imprisonment of Chapman and Marston on the ore of wounding James I's Scottish susceptibilities. Jonson characteristically sisted on keeping them company.

The play is a favourite with Baconians and other experts. It contains allusions Hamlet which will prove anything you please.

EASTWARD HO!

Characters

ASTER TOUCHSTONE, *a goldsmith*
UICKSILVER, GOLDING, *apprentices to Touchstone*
R PETRONEL FLASH
CURITY, *an usurer*
RAMBLE, *a lawyer*
AGULL, *a sea captain*
APETHRIFT, SPENDALL, *Virginian adventurers*
ITGUT, *a butcher's apprentice*
POLDAVY, *a tailor*
HOLDFAST, WOLF, *officers of the Counter*
HAMLET, *a footman*
POTKIN, *a tankard-bearer*
MISTRESS TOUCHSTONE
GERTRUDE, MILDRED, *her daughters*
WINNIFRID, *wife of Security*
SYNDEFIE, *mistress to Quicksilver*
BETTRICE, *a waiting-woman*
RS. FOND, MRS. GAZER, PAGE, COACHMAN, MESSENGER, SCRIVENER, DRAWER, TWO GENTLEMEN, CONSTABLE, TWO PRISONERS AND FRIEND

Scene.—LONDON AND THAMES-SIDE.

ACT I

SCENE I

Enter MASTER TOUCHSTONE *and* QUICKSILVER *at several doors;* QUICKSILVER *with his hat, pumps, short sword and dagger, and a racket trussed up under his cloak. At the middle door, enter* GOLDING, *discovering a goldsmith's shop, and walking short turns before it.*

TO. : And whither with you now? what loose action are you bound for? Come, what comrades are you to meet withal? where's the supper? where's the rendezvous?

QU. : Indeed, and in very good sober truth, sir——

TO. : Indeed, and in very good sober truth, sir! Behind my back thou wilt swear faster than a French footboy, and talk more bawdily than a common midwife; and now indeed and in very good sober truth, sir! but if a privy search should be made, with what furniture are you rigged now? Sirrah, I tell thee, I am thy master, William Touchstone, goldsmith; and thou my 'prentice, Francis Quicksilver, and I will see whither you are running. Work upon that now.

QU. : Why, sir, I hope a man may use his recreation with his master's profit.

TO. : Prentices' recreations are seldom with their masters' profit. Work upon that now. You shall give up your cloak, though you be no alderman. Heyday! ruffians'-hall sword, pumps, here's a racket indeed!

[TOUCHSTONE *uncloaks* QUICKSILVER.

QU. : Work upon that now.

TO. : Thou shameless varlet! dost thou jest at thy lawful master, contrary to thy indentures?

QU. : Why 'sblood, sir! my mother's a gentlewoman, and my father a justice of peace and of Quorum; and though I am a younger brother and a prentice, yet I hope I am my father's son; and by God's lid, 'tis for your worship and for your commodity that I keep company. I am entertained among gallants, true. They call me cousin Frank, right; I lend them moneys, good; they spend it well. But when they are spent, must not they strive to get more, must not their land fly? and to whom? Shall not your worship ha' the refusal? Well, I am a good member of the city, if I were well considered. How would merchants thrive, if gentlemen would not be unthrifts? How could gentlemen be unthrifts if their humours were not fed? How should their humours be fed but by white meat, and cunning secondings? Well, the city might consider us. I am going to an ordinary now: the gallants fall to play; I carry light gold with me; the gallants call, "Cousin Frank, some gold for silver"; I change, gain by it; the gallants lose the gold, and then call, "Cousin Frank, lend me some silver." Why——

TO. : Why? I cannot tell. Seven-score pound art thou out in the cash; but look to it, I will not be gallanted out of my moneys. And as for my rising by other men's fall, God shield me! did I gain my wealth by ordinaries? no: by exchanging of gold? no: by keeping of gallants' company? no. I hired me a little shop, fought low, took small gain, kept no debt-book, garnished my shop, for want of plate, with good wholesome thrifty sentences; as, "Touchstone, keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee." "Light gains makes heavy purses." "'Tis good to be merry and wise." And when I was wived, having something to stick to, I had the horn of suretyship ever before my eyes. You all know the device of the horn, where the young fellow slips in at the butt-end, and comes squeezed out at the buckall: and I grew up, and I praise Providence, I bear my brows now as high as the best of my neighbours:

but thou—well, look to the accounts; your father's bond lies for you: seven-score pound is yet in the rear.

Qu.: Why 'slid, sir, I have as good, as proper gallants' words for it as any are in London—gentlemen of good phrase, perfect language, passingly behaved; gallants that wear socks and clean linen, and call me "kind cousin Frank," "good cousin Frank," for they know my father: and, by God's lid shall I not trust 'hem?—not trust?

Enter a PAGE, *as inquiring for* TOUCHSTONE'S *shop.*

Go.: What do ye lack, sir? What is't you'll buy, sir?

To.: Ay, marry sir; there's a youth of another piece. There's thy fellow-prentice as good a gentleman born as thou art: nay, and better meaned. But does he pump it, or racket it? Well, if he thrive not, if he outlast not a hundred such crackling bavins as thou art, God and men neglect industry.

Go.: It is his shop, and here my master walks. [*To the* PAGE.

To.: With me, boy?

Pa.: My master, Sir Petronel Flash, recommends his love to you, and will instantly visit you.

To.: To make up the match with my eldest daughter, my wife's dilling, whom she longs to call madam. He shall find me unwillingly ready, boy. (*Exit* PAGE.) There's another affliction too. As I have two prentices, the one of a boundless prodigality, the other of a most hopeful industry—so have I only two daughters: the eldest, of a proud ambition and nice wantonness; the other of a modest humility and comely soberness. The one must be ladyfied, forsooth, and be attired just to the court-cut, and long tail. So far is she ill natured to the place and means of my preferment and fortune, that she throws all the contempt and despite hatred itself can cast upon it. Well, a piece of land she has; 'twas her grandmother's gift; let her, and her Sir Petronel, flash out that; but as for my substance, she that scorns me, as I am a citizen and tradesman, shall never pamper her pride with my industry; shall never use me as men do foxes, keep themselves warm in the skin, and throw the body that bare it to the dunghill. I must go entertain this Sir Petronel. Golding, my utmost care's for thee, and only trust in thee; look to the shop. As for you, Master Quicksilver, think of husks, for thy course is running directly to the prodigal's hog's-trough; husks, sirrah! Work upon that now. [*Exit* TOUCHSTONE.

Qu.: Marry faugh, goodman flat-cap; 'sfoot! though I am a prentice I can give arms; and my father's a justice-a-peace by descent, and 'sblood——

Go.: Fie, how you swear!

Qu.: 'Sfoot, man, I am a gentleman, and may swear by my pedigree. God's my life! Sirrah Golding, wilt be ruled by a fool? Turn good fellow, turn swaggering gallant, and let the welkin roar, and Erebus also. Look not westward to the fall of Dan Phœbus, but to the east—Eastward-ho!

"*Where radiant beams of lusty Sol appear,*
And bright Eous makes the welkin clear."

We are both gentlemen, and therefore should be no coxcombs: let's be no longer fools to this flat-cap, Touchstone. Eastward, bully, this satin belly, and canvas-backed Touchstone: 'slife! man, his father was a malt-man and his mother sold ginger-bread in Christ-church.

Go.: What would ye ha' me do?

Qu.: Why, do nothing, be like a gentleman, be idle; the curse of man is labour. Wipe thy bum with testones, and make ducks and drakes with shillings. What, Eastward-ho! Wilt thou cry, "what is't ye lack?" stand with

a bare pate, and a dropping nose, under a wooden pent-house, and art a gentleman? Wilt thou bear tankards, and may'st bear arms? Be ruled; turn gallant; Eastward-ho! ta, lirra, lirra, ro, who calls Jeronimo? Speak, here I am. God's so! how like a sheep thou look'st; a my conscience, some cow-herd begot thee, thou Golding of Golding-hall! Ha, boy?

Go. : Go, ye are a prodigal coxcomb! I a cowherd's son, because I turn not a drunken whore-hunting rake-hell like thyself!

Qu. : Rake-hell! rake-hell!

[*Offers to draw, and* Golding *trips up his heels and holds him.*

Go. : Pish, in soft terms, ye are a cowardly bragging boy. I'll ha' you whipt.

Qu. : Whipt?—that's good, i'faith! untruss me?

Go. : No, thou wilt undo thyself. Alas! I behold thee with pity, not with anger: thou common shot-clog, gull of all companies; methinks I see thee already walking in Moorfields without a cloak, with half a hat, without a band, a doublet with three buttons, without a girdle, a hose with one point, and no garter, with a cudgel under thine arm, borrowing and begging three pence.

Qu. : Nay, 'slife! take this and take all; as I am a gentleman born, I'll be drunk, grow valiant, and beat thee. [*Exit.*

Go. : Go, thou most madly vain, whom nothing can recover but that which reclaims atheists, and makes great persons sometimes religious—calamity. As for my place and life, thus I have read :—

Whate'er some vainer youth may term disgrace,
The gain of honest pains is never base;
From trades, from arts, from valour, honour springs,
These three are founts of gentry, yea, of kings.

SCENE II

Enter Gertrude, Mildred, Bettrice, *and* Poldavy *a tailor;* Poldavy *with a fair gown, Scotch farthingale, and French-fall in his arms;* Gertrude *in a French head-attire, and citizen's gown;* Mildred *sewing, and* Bettrice *leading a monkey after her.*

Ge. : For the passion of patience, look if Sir Petronel approach—that sweet, that fine, that delicate, that—for love's sake tell me if he come. O sister Mill, though my father be a low-capped tradesman, yet I must be a lady; and I praise God my mother must call me madam. Does he come? Off with this gown, for shame's sake, off with this gown: let not my knight take me in the city-cut in any hand: tear't, pax on't (does he come?) tear't off. "Thus whilst she sleeps, I sorrow for her sake," &c.

Mi. : Lord, sister, with what an immodest impatiency and disgraceful scorn do you put off your city 'tire; I am sorry to think you imagine to right yourself in wronging that which hath made both you and us.

Ge. : I tell you I cannot endure it, I must be a lady: do you wear your coif with a London licket, your stammel petticoat with two guards, the buffin gown with the tufftaffety cape, and the velvet lace. I must be a lady, and I will be a lady. I like some humours of the City-dames well: to eat cherries only at an angel a pound, good; to dye rich scarlet, black, pretty; to line a grogram gown clean thorough with velvet, tolerable; their pure linen, their smocks of three pounds a smock, are to be borne withal. But your mincing niceries, taffata pipkins, durance petticoats, and silver bodkins—God's my life, as I shall be a lady, I cannot endure it! Is he come yet? Lord, what a long knight 'tis! "And ever she cried, Shout home!" and yet I knew one longer; "And ever she cried, Shout home," fa, la, ly, re, lo, la!

Mi. : Well, sister, those that scorn their nest, oft fly with a sick wing.

Ge. : Bow-bell !

Mi. : Where titles presume to thrust before fit means to second them, wealth and respect often grow sullen, and will not follow. For sure in this, I would for your sake I spake not truth : *Where ambition of place goes before fitness of birth, contempt and disgrace follow*. I heard a scholar once say, that Ulysses, when he counterfeited himself mad, yoked cats and foxes and dogs together to draw his plough, whiles he followed and sowed salt ; but sure I judge them truly mad, that yoke citizens and courtiers, tradesmen and soldiers, a goldsmith's daughter and a knight. Well, sister, pray God my father sow not salt too.

Ge. : Alas ! poor Mildred, when I am a lady, I'll pray for thee yet, i'faith : nay, and I'll vouchsafe to call thee sister Mill still ; for though thou art not like to be a lady as I am, yet sure thou art a creature of God's making ; and mayest peradventure to be saved as soon as I (does he come ?). " And ever and anon she doubled in her song." Now, lady's my comfort, what profane ape's here ? Tailor, Poldavy, prithee, fit it, fit it : is this a right Scot ? Does it clip close, and bear up round ?

Po. : Fine and stiffly, i'faith ; 'twill keep your thighs so cool, and make your waist so small ; here was a fault in your body, but I have supplied the defect, with the effect of my steel instrument, which, though it have but one eye, can see to rectify the imperfection of the proportion.

Ge. : Most edifying tailor ! I protest you tailors are most sanctified members, and make many crooked things go upright. How must I bear my hands ? Light ? light ?

Po. : O ay, now you are in the lady-fashion, you must do all things light. Tread light, light. Ay, and fall so : that's the Court-amble.

[*She trips about the stage.*

Ge. : Has the Court ne'er a trot ?

Po. : No, but a false gallop, lady.

Ge. : " And if she will not go to bed "— [*Cantat.*

Be. : The knight's come, forsooth.

Enter Sir Petronel, Master Touchstone, *and* Mistress Touchstone

Ge. : Is my knight come ? O the Lord, my band ! Sister, do my cheeks look well ? Give me a little box a the ear, that I may seem to blush ; now, now ! So, there, there, there ! here he is : O my dearest delight ! Lord, Lord ! and how does my knight ?

To. : Fie ! with more modesty.

Ge. : Modesty ! why, I am no citizen now—modesty ! Am I not to be married ? y'are best to keep me modest, now I am to be a lady.

Sir Pe. : Boldness is good fashion and courtlike.

Ge. : Ay, in a country lady I hope it is, as I shall be. And how chance ye came no sooner, knight ?

Sir P. : 'Faith, I was so entertained in the progress with one Count Epernoum, a Welsh knight ; we had a match at balloon too with my Lord Whachum, for four crowns.

Ge. : At baboon ? Jesu ! you and I will play at baboon in the country, knight.

Sir Pe. : O, sweet lady ! 'tis a strong play with the arm.

Ge. : With arm or leg, or any other member, if it be a Court-sport. And when shall's be married, my knight ?

Sir Pe. : I come now to consummate it, and your father may call a poor knight son-in-law.

M. To. : Sir, ye are come ; what is not mine to keep I must not be sorry to

forego. A 100 li. land her grandmother left her, 'tis yours ; herself (as her mother's gift) is yours. But if you expect aught from me, know, my hand and mine eyes open together ; I do not give blindly. Work upon that now.

SIR PE. : Sir, you mistrust not my means ? I am a knight.

TO. : Sir, sir, what I know not, you will give me leave to say I am ignorant of.

MIST. TO. : Yes, that he is a knight ; I know where he had money to pay the gentlemen-ushers and heralds their fees. Ay, that he is a knight, and so might you have been too, if you had been aught else than an ass, as well as some of your neighbours. And I thought you would not ha' been knighted, as I am an honest woman, I would ha' dubbed you myself. I praise God I have wherewithal. But as for your daughter——

GE. : Ay, mother, I must be a lady to-morrow ; and by your leave, mother (I speak it not without my duty, but only in the right of my husband), I must take place of you, mother.

MIST. TO. : That you shall, lady-daughter, and have a coach as well as I too.

GE. : Yes, mother. But by your leave, mother (I speak it not without my duty, but only in my husband's right), my coachhorses must take the wall of your coachhorses.

TO. : Come, come, the day grows low ; 'tis supper-time ; use my house ; the wedding solemnity is at my wife's cost ; thank me for nothing but my willing blessing ; for I cannot feign, my hopes are faint. And, sir, respect my daughter; she has refused for you wealthy and honest matches, known good men, well-moneyed, better traded, best reputed.

GE. : Body-a-truth ! chittizens, chittizens ! Sweet knight, as soon as ever we are married, take me to thy mercy out of this miserable chitty ; presently carry me out of the scent of Newcastle coal, and the hearing of Bow-bell ; I beseech thee down with me, for God's sake !

TO. : Well, daughter, I have read that old wit sings :—

The greatest rivers flow from little springs.
Though thou art full, scorn not thy means at first,
He that's most drunk may soonest be a-thirst.

Work upon that now.

[*All but* TOUCHSTONE, MILDRED, *and* GOLDING *depart.*

No, no ! yond' stand my hopes—Mildred, come hither, daughter. And how approve you your sister's fashion ? how do you fancy her choice ? what dost thou think ?

MI. : I hope as a sister, well.

TO. : Nay but, nay but, how dost thou like her behaviour and humour ? Speak freely.

MI. : I am loth to speak ill ; and yet I am sorry of this, I cannot speak well.

TO. : Well ; very good, as I would wish ; a modest answer. Golding, come hither ; hither, Golding. How dost thou like the knight, Sir Flash ? does he not look big ? how likest thou the elephant ? he says he has a castle in the country.

GO. : Pray heaven, the elephant carry not his castle on his back.

TO. : 'Fore heaven, very well ! but seriously, how dost repute him ?

GO. : The best I can say of him is, I know him not.

TO. : Ha, Golding ! I commend thee, I approve thee, and will make it appear my affection is strong to thee. My wife has her humour, and I will ha' mine. Dost thou see my daughter here ? She is not fair, well-favoured or so indifferent, which modest measure of beauty shall not make it thy only work to watch her, nor sufficient mischance to suspect her. Thou art towardly, she

is modest ; thou art provident, she is careful. She's now mine ; give me thy hand, she's now thine. Work upon that now.

Go. : Sir, as your son, I honour you ; and as your servant, obey you.

To. : Sayest thou so ? Come hither, Mildred. Do you see yond' fellow ? he is a gentleman, though my prentice, and has somewhat to take too ; a youth of good hope ; well friended, well parted. Are you mine ? you are his. Work you upon that now.

Mi. : Sir, I am all yours ; your body gave me life ; your care and love, happiness of life ; let your virtue still direct it, for to your wisdom I wholly dispose myself.

To. : Say'st thou so ? Be you two better acquainted. Lip her, lip her, knave. So, shut up shop : in. We must make holiday.

[*Exeunt* Golding *and* Mildred.

This match shall on, for I intend to prove
Which thrives the best, the mean or lofty love.
Whether fit wedlock vow'd 'twixt like and like,
Or prouder hopes, which daringly o'erstrike
Their place and means. 'Tis honest time's expense,
When seeming lightness bears a moral sense.
Work upon that now. [*Exit.*

ACT II

SCENE I

Touchstone, Quicksilver, Golding, *and* Mildred, *sitting on either side of the stall.*

To. : Quicksilver, Master Francis Quicksilver, Master Quicksilver !

Enter Quicksilver.

Qu. : Here, sir (ump).

To. : So, sir ; nothing but flat Master Quicksilver (without any familiar addition) will fetch you ; will you truss my points, sir ?

Qu. : Ay, forsooth (ump).

To. : How now, sir ? the drunken hiccup so soon this morning ?

Qu. : 'Tis but the coldness of my stomach, forsooth.

To. : What ? have you the cause natural for it ? y' are a very learned drunkard : I believe I shall miss some of my silver spoons with your learning. The nuptial night will not moisten your throat sufficiently, but the morning likewise must rain her dews into your gluttonous weasand.

Qu. : An't please you, sir, we did but drink (ump) to the coming off of the knightly bridegroom.

To. : To the coming off an' him ?

Qu. : Ay, forsooth, we drunk to his coming on (ump) when we went to bed ; and now we are up, we must drink to his coming off : for that's the chief honour of a soldier, sir ; and therefore we must drink so much the more to it, forsooth (ump).

To. : A very capital reason ! So that you go to bed late, and rise early to commit drunkenness ; you fulfil the scripture very sufficient wickedly, forsooth.

Qu. : The knight's men, forsooth, be still a their knees at it (ump), and because 'tis for your credit, sir, I would be loth to flinch.

To. : I pray, sir, e'en to 'hem again then ; y' are one of the separated crew, one of my wife's faction, and my young lady's, with whom, and with their great match, I will have nothing to do.

Qu. : So, sir, now I will go keep my (ump) credit with 'hem, an't please you, sir.

To. : In any case, sir, lay one cup of sack more a' your cold stomach, I beseech you.

Qu. : Yes, forsooth. [*Exit* Quicksilver.

To. : This is for my credit ; servants ever maintain drunkenness in their master's house for their master's credit ; a good idle serving-man's reason. I think time the night is past ; I ne'er waked to such cost ; I think we have stowed more sorts of flesh in our bellies than ever Noah's ark received ; and for wine, why my house turns giddy with it, and more noise in it than at a conduit. Ay me ! even beasts condemn our gluttony. Well, 'tis our city's fault, which, because we commit seldom, we commit the more sinfully ; we lose no time in our sensuality, but we make amends for it. O that we would do so in virtue, and religious negligences ! But see here are all the sober parcels my house can show ; I'll eavesdrop, hear what thoughts they utter this morning.

Enter Golding.

Go. : But is it possible that you, seeing your sister preferred to the bed of a knight, should contain your affections in the arms of a prentice ?

Mi. : I had rather make up the garment of my affections in some of the same piece, than, like a fool, wear gowns of two colours, or mix sackcloth with satin.

Go. : And do the costly garments—the title and fame of a lady, the fashion, observation, and reverence proper to such preferment—no more inflame you than such convenience as my poor means and industry can offer to your virtues ?

Mi. : I have observed that the bridle given to those violent flatteries of fortune is seldom recovered ; they bear one headlong in desire from one novelty to another, and where those ranging appetites reign, there is ever more passion than reason : no stay, and so no happiness. These hasty advancements are not natural. Nature hath given us legs to go to our objects ; not wings to fly to them.

Go. : How dear an object you are to my desires I cannot express ; whose fruition would my master's absolute consent and yours vouchsafe me, I should be absolutely happy. And though it were a grace so far beyond my merit, that I should blush with unworthiness to receive it, yet thus far both my love and my means shall assure your requital : you shall want nothing fit for your birth and education ; what increase of wealth and advancement the honest and orderly industry and skill of our trade will afford in any, I doubt not will be aspired by me ; I will ever make your contentment the end of my endeavours ; I will love you above all ; and only your grief shall be my misery, and your delight my felicity.

To. : Work upon that now. By my hopes, he wooes honestly and orderly ; he shall be anchor of my hopes ! Look, see the ill-yoked monster, his fellow !

Enter Quicksilver *unlaced, a towel about his neck, in his flat-cap, drunk.*

Qu. : Eastward-ho ! *Holla, ye pampered jades of Asia !*

To. : Drunk now downright, a my fidelity !

Qu. : (Ump) pull do, pull do ; show's, quoth the caliver.

Go. : Fie, fellow Quicksilver, what a pickle are you in !

Qu. : Pickle ? pickle in thy throat ; zounds, pickle ! Wa, ha, ho ! good-morrow, knight Petronel : morrow, lady goldsmith ; come off, knight, with a counter-buff, for the honour of knighthood.

Go. : Why, how now, sir ? do ye know where you are ?

Qu. : Where I am ? why, 'sblood ! you jolthead, where I am !
Go. : Go to, go to, for shame ; go to bed and sleep out this immodesty : thou shamest both my master and his house.
Qu. : Shame ? what shame ? I thought thou would'st show thy bringing-up ; and thou wert a gentleman as I am, thou would'st think it no shame to be drunk. Lend me some money, save my credit ; I must dine with the serving-men and their wives—and their wives, sirrah !
Go. : E'en who you will ; I'll not lend thee threepence.
Qu. : 'Sfoot ; lend me some money ; *hast thou not Hyren here ?*
To. : Why, how now, sirrah ? what vein's this, ha ?
Qu. : *Who cries on murther ? Lady was it you ?* how does our master ? pray thee cry Eastward-ho !
To. : Sirrah, sirrah, y'are past your hiccup now ; I see y'are drunk.
Qu. : 'Tis for your credit, master.
To. : And hear you keep a whore in town.
Qu. : 'Tis for your credit, master.
To. : And what you are out in cash, I know.
Qu. : So do I ; my father's a gentleman. Work upon that now. Eastward-ho !
To. : Sir, Eastward-ho will make you go Westward-ho ; I will no longer dishonest my house, nor endanger my stock with your licence. There, sir, there's your indenture ; all your apparel (that I must know) is on your back, and from this time my door is shut to you : from me be free ; but for other freedom, and the moneys you have wasted, Eastward-ho shall not serve you.
Qu. : Am I free a my fetters ? Rent, fly with a duck in thy mouth, and now I tell thee, Touchstone——
To. : Good sir——
Qu. : *When this eternal substance of my soul*——
To. : Well said ; change your gold-ends for your play-ends.
Qu. : *Did live imprison'd in my wanton flesh*—
To. : What then, sir ?
Qu. : *I was a courtier in the Spanish Court, and Don Andrea was my name.*
To. : Good master Don Andrea, will you march ?
Qu. : Sweet Touchstone, will you lend me two shillings ?
To. : Not a penny.
Qu. : Not a penny ? I have friends, and I have acquaintance ; I will piss at thy shop-posts, and throw rotten eggs at thy sign. Work upon that now.
[*Exit staggering.*
To. : Now, sirrah, you ! hear you ? you shall serve me no more neither—not an hour longer.
Go. : What mean you, sir ?
To. : I mean to give thee thy freedom, and with thy freedom my daughter, and with my daughter a father's love. And with all these such a portion as shall make Knight Petronel himself envy thee ! Y'are both agreed, are ye not ?
Am. : With all submission, both of thanks and duty.
To. : Well then, the great Power of heaven bless and confirm you. And, Golding, that my love to thee may not show less than my wife's love to my eldest daughter, thy marriage-feast shall equal the knight's and hers.
Go. : Let me beseech you, no, sir ; the superfluity and cold meat left at their nuptials will with bounty furnish ours. The grossest prodigality is superfluous cost of the belly ; nor would I wish any invitement of states or friends, only your reverent presence and witness shall sufficiently grace and confirm us.
To. : Son to my own bosom, take her and my blessing. The nice fondling, my lady, sir-reverence, that I must not now presume to call daughter, is so

ravished with desire to hansell her new coach, and see her knight's Eastward Castle, that the next morning will sweat with her busy setting forth. Away will she and her mother, and while their preparation is making, ourselves, with some two or three other friends, will consummate the humble match we have in God's name concluded.

'Tis to my wish ; for I have often read,
Fit birth, fit age, keeps long a quiet bed.
'Tis to my wish ; for tradesmen, well 'tis known,
Get with more ease than gentry keeps his own. [*Exit.*

SCENE II

SECURITY *solus.*

SEC. : My privy guest, lusty Quicksilver, has drunk too deep of the bride-bowl ; but with a little sleep, he is much recovered ; and, I think, is making himself ready to be drunk in a gallanter likeness. My house is as 'twere the cave where the young outlaw hoards the stolen vails of his occupation ; and here, when he will revel it in his prodigal similitude, he retires to his trunks, and (I may say softly) his punks: he dares trust me with the keeping of both ; for I am Security itself ; my name is Security, the famous usurer.

SCENE III

Enter QUICKSILVER *in his prentice's coat and cap, his gallant breeches and stockings, gartering himself,* SECURITY *following.*

QU. : Come, old Security, thou father of destruction ! th' indented sheepskin is burned wherein I was wrapt ; and I am now loose, to get more children of perdition into thy usurous bonds. Thou feed'st my lechery, and I thy covetousness ; thou art pander to me for my wench, and I to thee for thy cozenages. Kaa me, kaa thee, runs through court and country.

SEC. : Well said, my subtle Quicksilver ! These kaa's ope the doors to all this world's felicity : the dullest forehead sees it. Let not master courtier think he carries all the knavery on his shoulders : I have known poor Hob, in the country, that has worn hob-nails on's shoes, have as much villany in's head as he that wears gold buttons in's cap.

QU. : Why, man, 'tis the London highway to thrift ; if virtue be used, 'tis but as a scape to the net of villany. They that use it simply, thrive simply, I warrant. "Weight and fashion makes goldsmiths cuckolds."

Enter SYNDEFIE, *with* QUICKSILVER'S *doublet, cloak, rapier, and dagger.*

SY. : Here, sir, put off the other half of your prenticeship.

QU. : Well said, sweet Syn ! Bring forth my bravery.
Now let my trunks shoot forth their silks conceal'd.
I now am free, and now will justify
My trunks and punks. Avaunt, dull flat-cap, then !
Via the curtain that shadow'd Borgia !
There lie, thou husk of my envassail'd state,
I, Sampson, now have burst the Philistines' bands,
And in thy lap, my lovely Dalila,
I'll lie, and snore out my enfranchised state.

When Sampson was a tall young man.
His power and strength increased than ;
He sold no more nor cup nor can ;
But did them all despise.

Old Touchstone, now write to thy friends
For one to sell thy base gold-ends ;
Quicksilver now no more attends
Thee, Touchstone.

But, dad, hast thou seen my running gelding dressed to-day ?

SEC. : That I have, Frank. The ostler a'th' Cock dressed him for a breakfast.

QU. : What ! did he eat him ?

SEC. : No, but he eat his breakfast for dressing him ; and so dressed him for breakfast.

QU. : *O witty age ! where age is young in wit,*
And all youths' words have gray-beards full of it !

SEC. : But alas, Frank ! how will all this be maintained now ? Your place maintained it before.

QU. : Why, and I maintained my place. I'll to the court : another manner of place for maintenance, I hope, than the silly City ! I heard my father say, I heard my mother sing an old song and a true : *Thou art a she-fool, and know'st not what belongs to our male wisdom.* I shall be a merchant, forsooth : trust my estate in a wooden trough as he does ! What are these ships but tennis-balls for the winds to play withal ? tossed from one wave to another ; now underline, now over the house ; sometimes brick-walled against a rock, so that the guts fly out again ; sometimes strook under the wide hazard, and farewell, master merchant !

SY. : Well, Frank, well : the seas you say, are uncertain : but he that sails in your Court seas shall find 'hem ten times fuller of hazard ; wherein to see what is to be seen is torment more than a free spirit can endure ; but when you come to suffer, how many injuries swallow you ! What care and devotion must you use to humour an imperious lord, proportion your looks to his looks, smiles to his smiles ; fit your sails to the wind of his breath !

QU. : Tush ! he's no journeyman in his craft that cannot do that.

SY. : But he's worse than a prentice that does it ; not only humouring the lord, but every trencher-bearer, every groom, that by indulgence and intelligence crept into his favour, and by panderism into his chamber ; he rules the roast ; and when my honourable lord says it shall be thus, my worshipful rascal, the groom of his close stool, says it shall not be thus, claps the door after him, and who dares enter ? A prentice, quoth you ? 'Tis but to learn to live ; and does that disgrace a man ? He that rises hardly stands firmly ; but he that rises with ease, alas ! falls as easily.

QU. : A pox on you ! who taught you this morality ?

SEC. : 'Tis 'long of this witty age, Master Francis. But, indeed, Mistress Syndefie, all trades complain of inconvenience, and therefore 'tis best to have none. The merchant, he complains and says, traffic is subject to much uncertainty and loss : let 'hem keep their goods on dry land, with a vengeance, and not expose other men's substances to the mercy of the winds, under protection of a wooden wall (as Master Francis says) ; and all for greedy desire to enrich themselves with unconscionable gain, two for one, or so ; where I, and such other honest men as live by lending money, are content with moderate profit ; thirty or forty i'th'hundred, so we may have it with quietness, and out of peril of wind and weather, rather than run those dangerous courses of trading, as they do.

QU. : Ay, dad, thou mayst well be called Security, for thou takes the safest course.

SEC. : 'Faith, the quieter, and the more contented, and, out of doubt, the more godly ; for merchants, in their courses, are never pleased, but ever repining

against heaven : one prays for a westerly wind, to carry his ship forth ; another for an easterly, to bring his ship home, and at every shaking of a leaf he falls into an agony, to think what danger his ship is in on such a coast, and so forth. The farmer, he is ever at odds with the weather : sometimes the clouds have been too barren ; sometimes the heavens forget themselves ; their harvests answer not their hopes ; sometimes the season falls out too fruitful, corn will bear no price, and so forth. The artificer, he's all for a stirring world : if his trade be too full, and fall short of his expectation, then falls he out of joint. Where we that trade nothing but money are free from all this ; we are pleased with all weathers, let it rain or hold-up, be calm or windy : let the season be whatsoever, let trade go how it will, we take all in good part, e'en what please the heavens to send us, so the sun stand not still, and the moon keep her usual returns, and make up days, months, and years.

Qu. : And you have good security ?

Sec. : Ay, marry, Frank, that's the special point.

Qu. : And yet, forsooth, we must have trades to live withal ; for we cannot stand without legs, nor fly without wings, and a number of such scurvy phrases. No, I say still, he that has wit, let him live by his wit ; he that has none, let him be a tradesman.

Sec. : Witty Master Francis ! 'tis pity any trade should dull that quick brain of yours. Do but bring Knight Petronel into my parchment toils once, and you shall never need to toil in any trade, a'my credit. You know his wife's land ?

Qu. : Even to a foot, sir ; I have been often there ; a pretty fine seat, good land, all entire within itself.

Sec. : Well wooded ?

Qu. : Two hundred pounds' worth of wood ready to fell, and a fine sweet house, that stands just in the midst on't, like a prick in the midst of a circle ; would I were your farmer, for a hundred pound a year !

Sec. : Excellent Master Francis ! how I do long to do thee good ! How I do hunger and thirst to have the honour to enrich thee : ay, even to die, that thou mightest inherit my living ! even hunger and thirst ! for a my religion, Master Francis, and so tell Knight Petronel, I do it to do him a pleasure.

Qu. : Marry, dad ! his horses are now coming up to bear down his lady ; wilt thou lend him thy stable to set 'hem in ?

Sec. : 'Faith, Master Francis, I would be loth to lend my stable out of doors ; in a greater matter I will pleasure him, but not in this.

Qu. : A pox of your hunger and thirst ! Well, dad, let him have money ; all he could any way get is bestowed on a ship now bound for Virginia ; the frame of which voyage is so closely conveyed that his new lady nor any of her friends know it. Notwithstanding, as soon as his lady's hand is gotten to the sale of her inheritance, and you have furnished him with money, he will instantly hoist sail and away.

Sec. : Now, a frank gale of wind go with him, Master Frank ! we have too few such knight adventurers who would not sell away competent certainties to purchase, with any danger, excellent uncertainties ? your true knight venturer ever does. Let his wife seal to-day ; he shall have his money to-day.

Qu. : To-morrow she shall, dad, before she goes into the country ; to work her to which action with the more engines, I purpose presently to prefer my sweet Syn here to the place of her gentlewoman ; whom you (for the more credit) shall present as your friend's daughter, a gentlewoman of the country, new come up with a will for awhile to learn fashions forsooth, and be toward some lady ; and she shall buzz pretty devices into her lady's ear ; feeding her humours so serviceably (as the manner of such as she is, you know).

SEC. : True, good Master Francis.

Enter SYNDEFIE.

QU. : That she shall keep her port open to anything she commends to her.

SEC. : A' my religion, a most fashionable project ; as good she spoil the lady, as the lady spoil her ; for 'tis three to one of one side. Sweet Mistress Syn, how are you bound to Master Francis ! I do not doubt to see you shortly wed one of the head men of our city.

SY. : But, sweet Frank, when shall my father Security present me ?

QU. : With all festination ; I have broken the ice to it already ; and will presently to the knight's house, whither, my good old dad, let me pray thee, with all formality to man her.

SEC. : Command me, Master Francis, I do hunger and thirst to do thee service. Come, sweet Mistress Syn, take leave of my Winnifrid, and we will instantly meet Frank, Master Francis, at your lady's.

Enter WINNIFRID *above*.

WI. : Where is my Cu there ? Cu ?

SEC. : Ay, Winnie.

WI. : Wilt thou come in, sweet Cu ?

SEC. : Ay, Winnie, presently. [*Exeunt.*

QU. : Ay, Winnie, quoth he, that's all he can do, poor man, he may well cut off her name at Winnie. O, 'tis an egregious pander ! What will not an usurous knave be, so he may be rich ? O, 'tis a notable Jew's trump ! I hope to live to see dogs' meat made of the old usurer's flesh, dice of his bones, and indentures of his skin ; and yet his skin is too thick to make parchment, 'twould make good boots for a peeter man to catch salmon in. Your only smooth skin to make fine vellum, is your Puritan's skin ; they be the smoothest and slickest knaves in a country.

SCENE IV

Enter SIR PETRONEL *in boots, with a riding wan.*

PE. : I'll out of this wicked town as fast as my horse can trot ! Here's now no good action for a man to spend his time in. Taverns grow dead ; ordinaries are blown up ; plays are at a stand ; houses of hospitality at a fall ; not a feather waving, nor a spur jingling anywhere. I'll away instantly.

QU. : Y' ad best take some crowns in your purse, knight, or else your Eastward Castle will smoke but miserably.

PE. : O, Frank ! my castle ? Alas ! all the castles I have are built with air, thou know'st.

QU. : I know it, knight, and therefore wonder whither your lady is going.

PE. : 'Faith, to seek her fortune, I think. I said I had a castle and land eastward, and eastward she will, without contradiction ; her coach and the coach of the sun must meet full butt. And the sun being out-shined with her ladyship's glory, she fears he goes westward to hang himself.

QU. : And I fear, when her enchanted castle becomes invisible, her ladyship will return and follow his example.

PE. : O, that she would have the grace ! for I shall never be able to pacify her, when she sees herself deceived so.

QU. : As easily as can be. Tell her she mistook your directions, and that shortly yourself will down with her to approve it ; and then clothe but her crouper in a new gown, and you may drive her any way you list. For these women, sir, are like Essex calves, you must wriggle 'hem on by the tail still, or they will never drive orderly.

PE. : But, alas ! sweet Frank, thou knowest my ability will not furnish her blood with those costly humours.

QU. : Cast that cost on me, sir. I have spoken to my old pander, Security, for money or commodity ; and commodity (if you will) I know he will procure you.

PE. : Commodity ! Alas ! what commodity ?

QU. : Why, sir ! what say you to figs and raisins ?

PE. : A plague of figs and raisins, and all such frail commodities ! We shall make nothing of 'hem.

QU. : Why then, sir, what say you to forty pounds in roasted beef ?

PE. : Out upon it, I have less stomach to that than to the figs and raisins ; I'll out of town, though I sojourn with a friend of mine, for stay here I must not ; my creditors have laid to arrest me, and I have no friend under heaven but my sword to bail me.

QU. : God's me, knight, put 'hem in sufficient sureties, rather than let your sword bail you ! Let 'hem take their choice, either the King's Bench or the Fleet, or which of the two Counters they like best, for, by the Lord, I like none of 'hem.

PE. : Well, Frank, there is no jesting with my earnest necessity ; thou know'st if I make not present money to further my voyage begun, all's lost, and all I have laid out about it.

QU. : Why, then, sir, in earnest, if you can get your wise lady to set her hand to the sale of her inheritance, the bloodhound, Security, will smell out ready money for you instantly.

PE. : There spake an angel : to bring her to which conformity, I must feign myself extremely amorous ; and alleging urgent excuses for my stay behind, part with her as passionately as she would from her foisting hound.

QU. : You have the sow by the right ear, sir. I warrant there was never child longed more to ride a cock-horse or wear his new coat, than she longs to ride in her new coach. She would long for everything when she was a maid, and now she will run mad for 'hem. I lay my life, she will have every year four children ; and what charge and change of humour you must endure while she is with child, and how she will tie you to your tackling till she be with child, a dog would not endure. Nay, there is no turnspit dog bound to his wheel more servilely than you shall be to her wheel ; for, as that dog can never climb the top of his wheel but when the top comes under him, so shall you never climb the top of her contentment but when she is under you.

PE. : 'Slight, how thou terrifiest me !

QU. : Nay, hark you, sir ; what nurses, what midwives, what fools, what physicians, what cunning women must be sought for (fearing sometimes she is bewitched, sometimes in a consumption), to tell her tales, to talk bawdy to her, to make her laugh, to give her glisters, to let her blood under the tongue and betwixt the toes ; how she will revile and kiss you, spit in your face, and lick it off again ; how she will vaunt you are her creature ; she made you of nothing ; how she could have had thousand mark jointures ; she could have been made a lady by a Scotch knight, and never ha' married him ; she could have had poynados in her bed every morning ; how she set you up, and how she will pull you down : you'll never be able to stand of your legs to endure it.

PE. : Out of my fortune, what a death is my life bound face to face to ! The best is, a large time-fitted conscience is bound to nothing : marriage is but a form in the school of policy, to which scholars sit fastened only with painted chains. Old Security's young wife is ne'er the further off with me.

Qu. : Thereby lies a tale, sir. The old usurer will be here instantly, with my punk Syndefie, whom, you know your lady has promised me to entertain for her gentlewoman ; and he (with a purpose to feed on you) invites you most solemnly by me to supper.

Pe. : It falls out excellently fitly : I see desire of gain makes jealousy venturous.

Enter Gertrude.

See, Frank, here comes my lady. Lord ! how she views thee ! she knows thee not, I think, in this bravery.

Ge. : How now ? who be you, I pray ?

Qu. : One Master Francis Quicksilver, an't please your ladyship.

Ge. : God's my dignity ! as I am a lady, if he did not make me blush so that mine eyes stood a-water. Would I were unmarried again !

Enter Security *and* Syndefie.

Where's my woman, I pray ?

Qu. : See, madam, she now comes to attend you.

Sec. : God save my honourable knight and his worshipful lady !

Ge. : Y'are very welcome ; you must not put on your hat yet.

Sec. : No, madam ; till I know your ladyship's further pleasure, I will not presume.

Ge. : And is this a gentleman's daughter new come out of the country ?

Sec. : She is, madam ; and one that her father hath a special care to bestow in some honourable lady's service, to put her out of her honest humours, forsooth ; for she had a great desire to be a nun, an't please you.

Ge. : A nun ? what nun ? a nun substantive ? or a nun adjective ?

Sec. : A nun substantive, madam, I hope, if a nun be a noun. But I mean, lady, a vowed maid of that order.

Ge. : I'll teach her to be a maid of the order, I warrant you. And can you do any work belongs to a lady's chamber ?

Sy. : What I cannot do, madam, I would be glad to learn.

Ge. : Well said ; hold up, then ; hold up your head, I say ; come hither a little.

Sy. : I thank your ladyship.

Ge. : And hark you, good man, you may put on your hat now ; I do not look on you. I must have you of my faction now ; not of my knight's, maid.

Sy. : No, forsooth, madam, of yours.

Ge. : And draw all my servants in my bow, and keep my counsel, and tell me tales, and put me riddles, and read on a book sometimes when I am busy, and laugh at country gentlewomen and command anything in the house for my retainers ; and care not what you spend, for it is all mine ; and in any case be still a maid, whatsoever you do, or whatsoever any man can do unto you.

Sec. : I warrant your ladyship for that.

Ge. : Very well ; you shall ride in my coach with me into the country, to-morrow morning. Come, knight, I pray thee let's make a short supper, and to bed presently.

Sec. : Nay, good madam, this night I have a short supper at home waits on his worship's acceptation.

Ge. : By my faith, but he shall not go, sir ; I shall swoon and he sup from me.

Pe. : Pray thee, forbear ; shall he lose his provision ?

Ge. : Ay, by'r lady, sir, rather than I lose my longing. Come in, I say ; as I am a lady, you shall not go.

Qu. : I told him what a burr he had gotten.

SEC. : If you will not sup from your knight, madam, let me entreat your ladyship to sup at my house with him.

GE. : No, by my faith, sir ; then we cannot be abed soon enough after supper.

PE. : What a medicine is this ! Well, Master Security you are new married as well as I ; I hope you are bound as well. We must honour our young wives, you know.

QU. : In policy, dad, till to-morrow she has sealed.

SEC. : I hope in the morning yet your knighthood will breakfast with me ?

PE. : As early as you will, sir.

SEC. : I thank your good worship ; I do hunger and thirst to do you good, sir.

GE. : Come, sweet knight, come ; I do hunger and thirst to be abed with thee.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I

Enter PETRONEL, QUICKSILVER, SECURITY, BRAMBLE, *and* WINNIFRID.

PE. : Thanks for your feast-like breakfast, good Master Security ; I am sorry (by reason of my instant haste to so long a voyage as Virginia) I am without means by any kind amends to show how affectionately I take your kindness, and to confirm by some worthy ceremony a perpetual league of friendship betwixt us.

SEC. : Excellent knight ! let this be a token betwixt us of inviolable friendship. I am new married to this fair gentlewoman, you know ; and by my hope to make her fruitful, though I be something in years, I vow faithfully unto you to make you godfather, though in your absence, to the first child I am blest withal ; and henceforth call me gossip, I beseech you, if you please to accept it.

PE. : In the highest degree of gratitude, my most worthy gossip ; for confirmation of which friendly title, let me entreat my fair gossip, your wife here, to accept this diamond, and keep it as my gift to her first child, wheresoever my fortune, in event of my voyage, shall bestow me.

SEC. : How now, my coy wedlock ; make you strange of noble a favour ? Take it, I charge you, with all affection, and, by way of taking your leave, present boldly your lips to our honourable gossip.

QU. : How venturous he is to him, and how jealous to others !

PE. : Long may this kind touch of our lips print in our hearts all the forms of affection. And now, my good gossip, if the writings be ready to which my wife should seal, let them be brought this morning before she takes coach into the country, and my kindness shall work her to despatch it.

SEC. : The writings are ready, sir. My learned counsel here, Master Bramble the lawyer, hath perused them ; and within this hour I will bring the scrivener with them to your worshipful lady.

PE. : Good Master Bramble, I will here take my leave of you then. God send you fortunate pleas, sir, and contentious clients !

BR. : And you foreright winds, sir, and a fortunate voyage ! [*Exit.*

Enter a MESSENGER.

ME. : Sir Petronel, here are three or four gentlemen desire to speak with you.

PE. : What are they ?

QU. : They are your followers in this voyage, knight : Captain Seagull and his associates ; I met them this morning, and told them you would be here.

PE. : Let them enter, I pray you ; I know they long to be gone, for their stay is dangerous.

Enter SEAGULL, SCAPETHRIFT, *and* SPENDALL.

SEA. : God save my honourable colonel !

PE. : Welcome, good Captain Seagull, and worthy gentlemen. If you will meet my friend Frank here, and me, at the Blue Anchor Tavern by Billingsgate this evening, we will there drink to our happy voyage, be merry, and take boat to our ship with all expedition.

SP. : Defer it no longer, I beseech you, sir ; but as your voyage is hitherto carried closely ; and in another knight's name, so for your own safety and ours, let it be continued : our meeting and speedy purpose of departing known to as few as is possible, lest your ship and goods be attached.

QU. : Well advised, captain ; our colonel shall have money this morning to despatch all our departures ; bring those gentlemen at night to the place appointed, and, with our skins full of vintage, we'll take occasion by the vantage, and away.

SP. : We will not fail but be there, sir.

PE. : Good morrow, good captain, and my worthy associates. Health and all sovereignty to my beautiful gossip ; for you, sir, we shall see you presently with the writings.

SEC. : With writings and crowns to my honourable gossip. I do hunger and thirst to do you good, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter a COACHMAN *in haste, in his frock, feeding.*

CO. : Here's a stir when citizens ride out of town, indeed as if all the house were a-fire ! 'Slight ! they will not give a man leave to eat's breakfast afore he rises.

Enter HAMLET, *a footman, in haste.*

HA. : What, coachman—my lady's coach ! for shame ! her ladyship's ready to come down.

Enter POTKIN, *a tankard-bearer.*

PO. : 'Sfoot ! Hamlet, are you mad ? Whither run you now ? you should brush up my old mistress !

Enter SYNDEFIE.

SY. : What, Potkin ?—you must put off your tankard and put on your blue coat, and wait upon Mistress Touchstone into the country. [*Exit.*

PO. : I will, forsooth, presently. [*Exit.*

Enter MISTRESS FOND *and* MISTRESS GAZER.

FO. : Come, sweet Mistress Gazer, let's watch here, and see my Lady Flash take coach.

GA. : A my word here's a most fine place to stand in ; did you see the new ship launched last day, Mistress Fond ?

FO. : O God ! and we citizens should lose such a sight !

GA. : I warrant here will be double as many people to see her take coach as there were to see it take water.

FO. : O she's married to a most fine castle i'th' country, they say.

GA. : But there are no giants in the castle, are there ?

FO. : O no : they say her knight killed 'hem all, and therefore he was knighted.

GA. : Would to God her ladyship would come away !

Enter GERTRUDE, MISTRESS TOUCHSTONE, SYNDEFIE, HAMLET, POTKIN.

FO. : She comes, she comes, she comes !

GA., FO. : Pray heaven bless your ladyship !

GE. : Thank you, good people. My coach, for the love of heaven, my coach! In good truth I shall swoon else.

HA. : Coach, coach, my lady's coach! [*Exit.*

GE. : As I am a lady, I think I am with child already, I long for a coach so. May one be with child afore they are married, mother?

MIST. T. : Ay, by'r lady, madam ; a little thing does that ; I have seen a little prick no bigger than a pin's head swell bigger and bigger, till it has come to an ancome ; and e'en so 'tis in these cases.

Enter HAMLET.

HA. : Your coach is coming, madam.

GE. : That's well said. Now, heaven! methinks I am e'en up to the knees in preferment.

" *But a little higher, but a little higher, but a little higher,*
There, there, there lies Cupid's fire! "

MIST. T. : But must this young man, an't please you, madam, run by your coach all the way a-foot?

GE. : Ay, by my faith, I warrant him ; he gives no other milk, as I have another servant does.

MIST. T. : Alas! 'tis e'en pity, methinks ; for God's sake, madam, buy him but a hobby-horse ; let the poor youth have something betwixt his legs to ease 'hem. Alas ; we must do as we would be done to.

GE. : Go to, hold your peace, dame ; you talk like an old fool, I tell you!

Enter PETRONEL *and* QUICKSILVER.

PE. : Wilt thou be gone, sweet honeysuckle, before I can go with thee?

GE. : I pray thee, sweet knight, let me ; I do so long to dress up thy castle afore thou comest. But I marle how my modest sister occupies herself this morning, that she cannot wait on me to my coach, as well as her mother.

QU. : Marry, madam, she's married by this time to prentice Golding. Your father, and some one more, stole to church with 'hem in all the haste, that the cold meat left at your wedding might serve to furnish their nuptial table.

GE. : There's no base fellow, my father, now ; but he's e'en fit to father such a daughter : he must call me daughter no more now : but " madam," and " please you, madam " ; and " please your worship, madam," indeed. Out upon him! marry his daughter to a base prentice!

MIST. T. : What should one do? Is there no law for one that marries a woman's daughter against her will? How shall we punish him, madam?

GE. : As I am a lady, an't would snow, we'd so pebble 'hem with snow-balls as they come from church ; but, sirrah Frank Quicksilver.

QU. : Ay, madam.

GE. : Dost remember since thou and I clapt what-d'ye call'ts in the garret?

QU. : I know not what you mean, madam.

GE. : " *His head as white as milk, all flaxen was his hair ;*
But now he is dead, and laid in his bed,
And never will come again."
God be at your labour!

Enter TOUCHSTONE, GOLDING, MILDRED, *with rosemary.*

PE. : Was there ever such a lady?

QU. : See, madam, the bride and bridegroom!

GE. : God's my precious! God give you joy, mistress! What lack you? Now out upon thee, baggage! My sister married in a taffeta hat! Marry, hang you! Westward with a wanion t'ye! Nay, I have done wi' ye, minion, then,

i'faith ; never look to have my countenance any more, nor anything I can do for thee. Thou ride in my coach, or come down to my castle ! fie upon thee ! I charge thee in my ladyship's name, call me sister no more.

To. : An't please your worship, this is not your sister : this is my daughter, and she calls me father, and so does not your ladyship, an't please your worship, madam.

Mist. T. : No, nor she must not call thee father by heraldry, because thou makest thy prentice thy son as well as she. Ah ! thou misproud prentice, darest thou presume to marry a lady's sister ?

Go. : It pleased my master, forsooth, to embolden me with his favour ; and though I confess myself far unworthy so worthy a wife (being in part her servant, as I am your prentice) yet (since I may say it without boasting) I am born a gentleman, and by the trade I have learned of my master (which I trust taints not my blood), able, with mine own industry and portion, to maintain your daughter, my hope is, heaven will so bless our humble beginning, that in the end I shall be no disgrace to the grace with which my master hath bound me his double prentice.

To. : Master me no more, son, if thou think'st me worthy to be thy father.

Ge. : Son ! Now, good Lord, how he shines ! and you mark him, he's a gentleman !

Go. : Ay, indeed, madam, a gentleman born.

Pe. : Never stand a' your gentry, Master Bridegroom ; if your legs be no better than your arms, you'll be able to stand upright on neither shortly.

To. : An't please your good worship, sir, there are two sorts of gentlemen.

Pe. : What mean you, sir ?

To. : Bold to put off my hat to your worship——

Pe. : Nay, pray forbear, sir, and then forth with your two sorts of gentlemen.

To. : If your worship will have it so, I say there are two sorts of gentlemen. There is a gentleman artificial, and a gentleman natural. Now though your worship be a gentleman natural : work upon that now.

Qu. : Well said, old Touchstone ; I am proud to hear thee enter a set speech, i'faith ; forth, I beseech thee.

To. : Cry your mercy, sir, your worship's a gentleman I do not know. If you be one of my acquaintance, y'are very much disguised, sir.

Qu. : Go to, old quipper ; forth with thy speech, I say.

To. : What, sir, my speeches were ever in vain to your gracious worship ; and therefore, till I speak to you gallantry indeed, I will save my breath for my broth anon. Come, my poor son and daughter, let us hide ourselves in our poor humility, and live safe. Ambition consumes itself with the very show. Work upon that now.

Ge. : Let him go, let him go, for God's sake ! let him make his prentice his son, for God's sake ! give away his daughter, for God's sake ! and when they come a-begging to us for God's sake, let's laugh at their good husbandry for God's sake. Farewell, sweet knight, pray thee make haste after.

Pe. : What shall I say ?—I would not have thee go.

Qu. : " Now, O now, I must depart.
Part-ing though it absence move."
This ditty, knight, do I see in thy looks in capital letters.
" What a grief 'tis to depart, and leave the flower that has my heart !
My sweet lady, and alack for wo, why, should we part so ? "
Tell truth, knight, and shame all dissembling lovers ; does not your pain lie on that side ?

Pe. : If it do, canst thou tell me how I may cure it ?

Qu. : Excellent easily. Divide yourself in two halves, just by the girdlestead ;

send one half with your lady, and keep the t'other yourself ; or else do as all true lovers do—part with your heart, and leave your body behind. I have seen't done a hundred times : 'tis as easy a matter for a lover to part without a heart from his sweetheart, and he ne'er the worse, as for a mouse to get from a trap and leave his tail behind him. See, here comes the writings.

Enter SECURITY *with a* SCRIVENER.

SEC. : Good morrow to my worshipful lady. I present your ladyship with this writing, to which if you please to set your hand with your knight's, a velvet gown shall attend your journey, a' my credit.

GE. : What writing is it, knight ?

PE. : The sale, sweetheart, of the poor tenement I told thee of, only to make a little money to send thee down furniture for my castle, to which my hand shall lead thee.

GE. : Very well. Now give me your pen, I pray.

QU. : It goes down without chewing, i'faith.

SCR. : Your worships deliver this as your deed ?

AM. : We do.

GE. : So now, knight, farewell till I see thee.

PE. : All farewell to my sweetheart !

MIST T. : God-b'w'y', son knight.

PE. : Farewell, my good mother.

GE. : Farewell, Frank ; I would fain take thee down if I could.

QU. : I thank your good ladyship ; farewell, Mistress Syndefie. [*Exeunt.*

PE. : O tedious voyage, whereof there is no end !
What will they think of me ?

QU. : Think what they list. They longed for a vagary into the country, and now they are fitted. So a woman marry to ride in a coach, she cares not if she ride to her ruin. 'Tis the great end of many of their marriages. This is not the first time a lady has rid a false journey in her coach, I hope.

PE. : Nay, 'tis no matter, I care little what they think ; he that weighs men's thoughts has his hands full of nothing. A man, in the course of this world, should be like a surgeon's instrument—work in the wounds of others, and feel nothing himself. The sharper and subtler, the better.

QU. : As it falls out now, knight, you shall not need to devise excuses, or endure her outcries, when she returns ; we shall now begone before, where they cannot reach us.

PE. : Well, my kind compeer, you have now the assurance we both can make you ; let me now intreat you, the money we agreed on may be brought to the Blue Anchor, near to Billingsgate, by six o'clock ; where I and my chief friends, bound for this voyage, will with feasts attend you.

SEC. : The money, my most honourable compeer, shall without fail observe your appointed hour.

PE. : Thanks, my dear gossip. I must now impart
To your approved love, a loving secret ;
As one on whom my life doth more rely
In friendly trust than any man alive.
Nor shall you be the chosen secretary
Of my affections for affection only :
For I protest (if God bless my return)
To make you partner in my actions' gain
As deeply as if you had ventured with me
Half my expences. Know then, honest gossip
I have enjoy'd with such divine contentment

A gentlewoman's bed whom you well know,
That I shall ne'er enjoy this tedious voyage,
Nor live the least part of the time it asketh,
Without her presence ; so I thirst and hunger
To taste the dear feast of her company.
And if the hunger and the thirst you vow
As my sworn gossip, to my wished good
Be, as I know it is, unfeign'd and firm,
Do me an easy favour in your power.

SEC. : Be sure, brave gossip, all that I can do,
To my best nerve, is wholly at your service :
Who is the woman, first, that is your friend ?

PE. : The woman is your learned counsel's wife,
The lawyer, Master Bramble ; whom would you
Bring out this even in honest neighbourhood,
To take his leave with you, of me your gossip,
I, in the meantime, will send this my friend
Home to his house, to bring his wife disguised,
Before his face, into our company ;
For love hath made her look for such a wile,
To free her from his tyrannous jealousy.
And I would take this course before another,
In stealing her away to make us sport,
And gull his circumspection the more grossly ;
And I am sure that no man like yourself
Hath credit with him to entice his jealousy
To so long stay abroad as may give time
To her enlargement, in such safe disguise.

SEC. : A pretty, pithy, and most pleasant project !
Who would not strain a point of neighbourhood
For such a point device ? that as the ship
Of famous Draco went about the world,
Will wind about the lawyer, compassing
The world himself ; he hath it in his arms,
And that's enough for him, without his wife.
A lawyer is ambitious, and his head
Cannot be praised nor raised too high
With any fork of highest knavery.
I'll go fetch her straight. [*Exit* SECURITY.

PE. : So so. Now, Frank, go thou home to his house,
'Stead of his lawyer's, and bring his wife hither,
Who, just like to the lawyer's wife, is prison'd
With his stern usurous jealousy, which could never
Be over-reach'd thus but with over-reaching.

Enter SECURITY.

SEC. : And, Master Francis, watch you th' instant time
To enter with his exit : 'twill be rare,
Two fine horn'd beasts !—a camel and a lawyer !

QU. : How the old villain joys in villany !

SEC. : And hark you, gossip, when you have her here,
Have your boat ready, ship her to your ship
With utmost haste, lest Master Bramble stay you.
To o'er-reach that head that out-reacheth all heads ?

'Tis a trick rampant !—'tis a very quiblyn !
I hope this harvest to pitch cart with lawyers,
Their heads will be so forked. This sly touch.
Will get apes to invent a number such. [*Exit.*

Qu. : Was ever rascal honey'd so with poison ?
" He that delights in slavish avarice,
Is apt to joy in every sort of vice."
Well, I'll go fetch his wife, whilst he the lawyer's.

Pe. : But stay, Frank, let's think how we may disguise her upon this sudden.

Qu. : God's me ! there's the mischief ! But hark you, here's an excellent device : 'fore God, a rare one ! I will carry her a sailor's gown and cap, and cover her, and a player's beard.

Pe. : And what upon her head ?

Qu. : I tell you, a sailor's cap ! 'Slight, God forgive me ! what kind of figent memory have you ?

Pe. : Nay, then, what kind of figent wit hast thou ?
A sailor's cap ?—how shall she put it off
When thou present'st her to our company ?

Qu. : Tush, man, for that, make her a saucy sailor.

Pe. : Tush, tush ! 'tis no fit sauce for such sweet mutton. I know not what t' advise.

Enter Security, *with his wife's gown.*

Sec. : Knight, knight, a rare device !

Pe. : 'Swounds, yet again !

Qu. : What stratagem have you now ?

Sec. : The best that ever. You talk of disguising ?

Pe. : Ay, marry, gossip, that's our present care.

Sec. : Cast care away then ; here's the best device.
For plain Security (for I am no better)
I think, that ever lived : here's my wife's gown,
Which you may put upon the lawyer's wife,
And which I brought you, sir, for two great reasons ;
One is, that Master Bramble may take hold
Of some suspicion that it is my wife,
And gird me so perhaps with his law-wit ;
The other (which is policy indeed)
Is, that my wife may now be tied at home,
Having no more but her old gown abroad,
And not show me a quirk, while I firk others.
Is not this rare ?

Am. : The best that ever was.

Sec. : Am I not born to furnish gentlemen ?

Pe. : O my dear gossip !

Sec. : Well hold, Master Francis ; watch when the lawyer's out, and put it in.
And now I will go fetch him. [*Exit.*

Qu. : O my dad ! he goes as 'twere the devil to fetch the lawyer ; and devil shall be he, if horns will make him.

Pe. : Why, how now, gossip ? why stay you there musing ?

Sec. : A toy, a toy runs in my head, i'faith.

Qu. : A pox of that head ! is there more toys yet ?

Pe. : What is it, pray thee, gossip ?

Sec. : Why, sir, what if you should slip away now with my wife's best gown, I having no security for it ?

Qu. : For that I hope, dad, you will take our words.
Sec. : Ay, by th' mass, your word—that's a proper staff
For wise Security to lean upon !
But 'tis no matter, once I'll trust my name
On your crack'd credits ; let it take no shame.
Fetch the wench, Frank. [*Exit.*
Qu. : I'll wait upon you, sir.
And fetch you over, you were ne'er so fetch'd.
Go to the tavern, knight ; your followers
Dare not be drunk, I think, before their captain. [*Exit.*
Pe. : Would I might lead them to no hotter service
Till our Virginian gold were in our purses ! [*Exit.*

SCENE III

Enter Seagull, Spendall, *and* Scapethrift, *in the Tavern, with a* Drawer.

Sea. : Come, drawer, pierce your neatest hogshead, and let's have cheer—not fit for your Billingsgate tavern, but for our Virginian colonel ; he will be here instantly.
Dr. : You shall have all things fit, sir ; please you have any more wine ?
Sp. : More wine, slave ! whether we drink it or no, spill it, and draw more.
Sca. : Fill all the pots in your house with all sorts of liquor, and let 'hem wait on us here like soldiers in their pewter coats ; and though we do not employ them now, yet we will maintain 'hem till we do.
Dr. : Said like an honourable captain ; you shall have all you can command, sir. [*Exit* Drawer.
Sea. : Come, boys, Virginia longs till we share the rest of her maidenhead.
Sp. : Why, is she inhabited already with any English ?
Sea. : A whole country of English is there man, bred of those that were left there in '79 ; they have married with the Indians, and make 'hem bring forth as beautiful faces as any we have in England ; and therefore the Indians are so in love with 'hem, that all the treasure they have they lay at their feet.
Sca. : But is there such treasure there, captain, as I have heard ?
Sea. : I tell thee, gold is more plentiful there than copper is with us ; and for as much red copper as I can bring, I'll have thrice the weight in gold. Why, man, all their dripping-pans and their chamber-pots are pure gold ; and all the chains with which they chain up their streets are massy gold ; all the prisoners they take are fettered in gold ; and for rubies and diamonds, they go forth on holidays and gather 'hem by the sea-shore, to hang on their children's coats, and stick in their caps, as commonly as our children wear saffron-gilt brooches and groats with holes in 'hem.
Sca. : And is it a pleasant country withal ?
Sea. : As ever the sun shined on ; temperate and full of all sorts of excellent viands : wild boar is as common there as our tamest bacon is here ; venison as mutton. And then you shall live freely there, without sargeants, or courtiers, or lawyers, or intelligencers [only a few industrious Scots perhaps, who indeed are dispersed over the face of the whole earth. But as for them, there are no greater friends to Englishmen and England, when they are out on't, in the world, than they are. And for my own part, I would a hundred thousand of them were there, for we are all one countrymen, now, ye know, and we should find ten times more comfort of them there than we do here.][1] Then for your means to advancement, there it is simple, and not

1 This is the famous passage that gave offence to James the First, and caused the imprisonment of the Authors. The leaves containing it were cancelled and reprinted, and it only occurs in a few of the original copies.—Ed.

preposterously mixed. You may be an alderman there, and never be scavenger : you may be a nobleman, and never be a slave. You may come to preferment enough, and never be a pander ; to riches and fortune enough, and have never the more villany nor the less wit. Besides, there we shall have no more law than conscience, and not too much of either ; serve God enough, eat and drink enough, and " enough is as good as a feast."

SP. : God's me ! and how far is it thither ?

SEA. : Some six weeks' sail, no more, with any indifferent good wind. And if I get to any part of the coast of Africa, I'll sail thither with any wind ; or when I come to Cape Finisterre, there's a foreright wind continually wafts us till we come at Virginia. See, our colonel's come.

Enter SIR PETRONEL, *with his followers.*

PE. : Well met, good Captain Seagull, and my noble gentlemen ! Now the sweet hour of our freedom is at hand. Come, drawer, fill us some carouses, and prepare us for the mirth that will be occasioned presently. Here will be a pretty wench, gentlemen, that will bear us company all our voyage.

SEA. : Whatsoever she be, here's to her health, noble colonel, both with cap and knee.

PE. : Thanks, kind Captain Seagull, she's one I love dearly, and must not be known till we be free from all that know us. And so, gentlemen, here's to her health.

AM. : Let it come, worthy colonel ; " We do hunger and thirst for it."

PE. : Afore heaven ! you have hit the phrase of one that her presence will touch from the foot to the forehead, if ye knew it.

SP. : Why, then, we will join his forehead with her health, sir ; and Captain Scapethrift, here's to 'hem both.

Enter SECURITY *and* BRAMBLE.

SEC. : See, see, Master Bramble, 'fore heaven ! their voyage cannot but prosper ; they are o' their knees for success to it !

BR. : And they pray to god Bacchus.

SEC. : God save my brave colonel, with all his tall captains and corporals. See, sir, my worshipful learned counsel, Master Bramble, is come to take his leave of you.

PE. : Worshipful Master Bramble, how far do you draw us into the sweet-brier of your kindness ! Come, Captain Seagull, another health to this rare Bramble, that hath never a prick about him.

SEA. : I pledge his most smooth disposition, sir. Come, Master Security, bend your supporters, and pledge this notorious health here.

SEC. : Bend you yours likewise, Master Bramble ; for it is you shall pledge me.

SEA. : Not so, Master Security ; he must not pledge his own health.

SEC. : No, Master Captain ?

Enter QUICKSILVER, *with* WINNY *disguised.*

Why, then, here's one is fitly come to do him that honour.

QU. : Here's the gentlewoman your cousin, sir, whom, with much entreaty, I have brought to take her leave of you in a tavern ; ashamed whereof, you must pardon her if she put not off her mask.

PE. : Pardon me, sweet cousin ; my kind desire to see you before I went, made me so importunate to entreat your presence here.

SEC. : How now, Master Francis ? have you honoured this presence with a fair gentlewoman ?

QU. : Pray, sir, take you no notice of her, for she will not be known to you.

SEC. : But my learned counsel, Master Bramble here, I hope may know her.

Qu. : No more than you, sir, at this time ; his learning must pardon her.

Sec. : Well, God pardon her for my part, and I do, I'll be sworn ; and so, Master Francis, here's to all that are going eastward to-night towards Cuckold's Haven ; and so to the health of Master Bramble.

Qu. : I pledge it, sir. Hath it gone round, captain ?

Sea. : It has, sweet Frank ; and the round closes with thee.

Qu. : Well, sir, here's to all eastward and toward cuckolds, and so to famous Cuckold's Haven, so fatally remembered. [*Surgit.*

Pe. : Nay, pray thee, coz, weep not ; gossip Security.

Sec. : Ay, my brave gossip.

Pe. : A word, I beseech you, sir. Our friend, Mistress Bramble here, is so dissolved in tears, that she drowns the whole mirth of our meeting. Sweet gossip, take her aside and comfort her.

Sec. : Pity of all true love, Mistress Bramble ; what, weep you to enjoy your love ? What's the cause, lady ? Is't because your husband is so near, and your heart yearns to have a little abused him ? Alas, alas ! the offence is too common to be respected. So great a grace hath seldom chanced to so unthankful a woman, to be rid of an old jealous dotard, to enjoy the arms of a loving young knight, that when your prick-less Bramble is withered with grief of your loss, will make you flourish afresh in the bed of a lady.

Enter Drawer.

Dr. : Sir Petronel, here's one of your watermen come to tell you it will be flood these three hours ; and that 'twill be dangerous going against the tide, for the sky is overcast, and there was a porpoise even now seen at London-bridge, which is always the messenger of tempests, he says.

Pe. : A porpoise !—what's that to th' purpose ? Charge him, if he love his life to attend us ; can we not reach Blackwall (where my ship lies) against the tide, and in spite of tempests ? Captains and gentlemen, we'll begin a new ceremony at the beginning of our voyage, which I believe will be followed, of all future adventurers.

Sea. : What's that, good colonel ?

Pe. : This, Captain Seagull. We'll have our provided supper brought aboard Sir Francis Drake's ship, that hath compassed the world ; where, with full cups and banquets, we will do sacrifice for a prosperous voyage. My mind gives me that some good spirits of the waters should haunt the desert ribs of her, and be auspicious to all that honour her memory, and will with like orgies enter their voyages.

Sea. : Rarely conceited ! One health more to this motion, and aboard to perform it. He that will not this night be drunk, may he never be sober.

[*They compass in* Winnifrid, *dance the drunken round, and drink carouses.*

Br. : Sir Petronel and his honourable captains, in these young services we old servitors may be spared. We only came to take our leaves, and with one health to you all, I'll be bold to do so. Here, neighbour Security, to the health of Sir Petronel and all his captains.

Sec. : You must bend then, Master Bramble ; so now I am for you. I have one corner of my brain, I hope, fit to bear one carouse more. Here, lady, to you that are encompassed there, and are ashamed of our company. Ha, ha, ha ! by my troth, my learned counsel, Master Bramble, my mind runs so of Cuckold's Haven to-night, that my head runs over with admiration.

Br. : But is not that your wife, neighbour ?

Sec. : No, by my troth, Master Bramble. Ha, ha, ha ! A pox of all Cuckold's havens, I say !

Br. : A my faith, her garments are exceeding like your wife's.

SEC. : *Cucullus non facit monachum*, my learned counsel ; all are not cuckolds that seem so, nor all seem not that are so. Give me your hand, my learned counsel ; you and I will sup somewhere else than at Sir Francis Drake's ship to-night. Adieu, my noble gossip.

BR. : Good fortune, brave captains ; fair skies God send ye !

OMNES. : Farewell, my hearts, farewell !

PE. : Gossip, laugh no more at Cuckold's Haven, gossip.

SEC. : I have done, I have done, sir ; will you lead Master Bramble ? Ha, ha, ha !

PE. : Captain Seagull, charge a boat.

OMNES. : A boat, a boat, a boat ! [*Exeunt.*

DR. : Y'are in a proper taking indeed, to take a boat, especially at this time of night, and against tide and tempest. They say yet, "drunken men never take harm." This night will try the truth of that proverb. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV

Enter SECURITY.

SEC. : What, Winny !—wife, I say ! out of doors at this time ! where should I seek the gad-fly? Billingsgate, Billingsgate, Billingsgate ! She's gone with the knight, she's gone with the knight ; woe be to thee, Billingsgate ! A boat, a boat, a boat ! a full hundred marks for a boat ! [*Exit.*

ACT IV

SCENE I

Enter SLITGUT, *with a pair of ox-horns, discovering Cuckold's Haven above.*

SL. : All hail, fair haven of married men only ! for there are none but married men cuckolds. For my part, I presume not to arrive here, but in my master's behalf (a poor butcher of East-cheap), who sends me to set up (in honour of Saint Luke) these necessary ensigns of his homage. And up I got this morning, thus early, to get up to the top of this famous tree, that is all fruit and no leaves, to advance this crest of my master's occupation. Up then ; heaven and Saint Luke bless me, that I be not blown into the Thames as I climb, with the furious tempest. 'Slight ! I think the devil be abroad, in likeness of a storm, to rob me of my horns ! Hark how he roars ! Lord ! what a coil the Thames keeps ! she bears some unjust burthen, I believe, that she kicks and curvets thus to cast it. Heaven bless all honest passengers that are upon her back now ; for the bit is out of her mouth, I see, and she will run away with 'hem ! So, so, I think I have made it look the right way ; it runs against London Bridge, as it were, even full butt. And now let me discover from this lofty prospect, what pranks the rude Thames plays in her desperate lunacy. O me ! here's a boat has been cast away hard by. Alas, alas ! see one of her passengers labouring for his life to land at this haven here ! pray heaven he may recover it ! His next land is even just under me ; hold out yet a little, whatsoever thou art ; pray, and take a good heart to thee. 'Tis a man ; take a man's heart to thee ; yet a little further, get up a'thy legs, man ; now 'tis shallow enough. So, so, so ! Alas ! he's down again. Hold thy wind, father : 'tis a man in a night-cap. So ! now he's got up again ; now he's past the worst : yet, thanks be to heaven, he comes toward me pretty and strongly.

Enter SECURITY *without his hat, in a night-cap, wet band, &c.*

SEC. : Heaven, I beseech thee, how have I offended thee ! where am I cast

ashore now, that I may go a righter way home by land? Let me see; O I am scarce able to look about me: where is there any sea-mark that I am acquainted withal?

SIL. : Look up, father; are you acquainted with this mark?

SEC. : What! landed at Cuckold's Haven! Hell and damnation! I will run back and drown myself. [*He falls down.*

SIL. : Poor man, how weak he is! the weak water has washed away his strength.

SEC. : Landed at Cuckold's Haven! If it had not been to die twenty times alive, I should never have 'scaped death! I will never rise more; I will grovel here and eat dirt till I be choked; I will make the gentle earth do that, which the cruel water has denied me!

SIL. : Alas! good father, be not so desperate! Rise man; if you will I'll come presently and lead you home.

SEC. : Home! shall I make any know my home, that has known me thus abroad? How low shall I crouch away, that no eye may see me? I will creep on the earth while I live, and never look heaven in the face more. [*Exit creeping.*

SIL. : What young planet reigns now, trow, that old men are so foolish? What desperate young swaggerer would have been abroad such a weather as this, upon the water? Ay me! see another remnant of this unfortunate ship-wrack, or some other. A woman, i'faith, a woman; though it be almost at St. Katherine's, I discern it to be a woman, for all her body is above the water, and her clothes swim about her most handsomely. O, they bear her up most bravely! has not a woman reason to love the taking up of her clothes the better while she lives, for this? Alas! how busy the rude Thames is about her! A pox a that wave! it will drown her, i'faith, 'twill drown her! Cry God mercy, she has 'scaped it—I thank heaven she has 'scaped it! O how she swims like a mermaid! some vigilant body look out and save her. That's well said; just where the priest fell in, there's one sets down a ladder, and goes to take her up. God's blessing a thy heart, boy! Now take her up in thy arms and to bed with her; she's up, she's up! She's a beautiful woman, I warrant her; the billows durst not devour her.

Enter the DRAWER *in the Tavern before, with* WINNIFRID.

DR. : How fare you now, lady?

WI. : Much better, my good friend, than I wish; as one desperate of her fame, now my life is preserved.

DR. : Comfort yourself: that Power that preserved you from death can likewise defend you from infamy, howsoever you deserve it. Were not you one that took boat late this night, with a knight and other gentlemen at Billingsgate?

WI. : Unhappy that I am, I was.

DR. : I am glad it was my good hap to come down thus far after you, to a house of my friend's here in St. Katherine's, since I am now happily made a mean to your rescue from the ruthless tempest, which (when you took boat) was so extreme, and the gentleman that brought you forth so desperate and unsober, that I feared long ere this I should hear of your shipwreck, and therefore (with little other reason) made thus far this way. And this I must tell you, since perhaps you may make use of it, there was left behind you at our tavern, brought by a porter (hired by the young gentleman that brought you), a gentlewoman's gown, hat, stockings, and shoes; which if they be yours, and you please to shift you, taking a hard bed here in this house of my friend, I will presently go fetch you.

WI. : Thanks, my good friend, for your more than good news. The gown with all things bound with it are mine; which if you please to fetch as you have

promised, I will boldly receive the kind favour you have offered till your return ; entreating you, by all the good you have done in preserving me hitherto, to let none take knowledge of what favour you do me, or where such a one as I am bestowed, lest you incur me much more damage in my fame than you have done me pleasure in preserving my life.

Dr. : Come in, lady, and shift yourself ; resolve that nothing but your own pleasure shall be used in your discovery.

Wi. : Thank you, good friend ; the time may come, I shall requite you.

[*Exeunt.*

Sl. : See, see, see ! I hold my life, there's some other a taking up at Wapping now ! Look, what a sort of people cluster about the gallows there ! in good troth it is so. O me ! a fine young gentleman ! What, and taken up at the gallows ! Heaven grant he be not one day taken down there ! A my life, it is ominous ! Well, he is delivered for the time. I see the people have all left him ; yet will I keep my prospect awhile, to see if any more have been shipwracked.

Enter Quicksilver, *bare head.*

Qu. : Accursed that ever I was saved or born !
How fatal is my sad arrival here !
And if the stars and providence spake to me,
And said, " The drift of all unlawful courses
(Whatever end they dare propose themselves,
In frame of their licentious policies),
In the firm order of just destiny,
They are the ready highways to our ruins."[1]
I know not what to do ; my wicked hopes
Are, with this tempest, torn up by the roots.
O ! which way shall I bend my desperate steps,
In which unsufferable shame and misery.
Will not attend them ? I will walk this bank,
And see if I can meet the other relics
Of our poor shipwrack'd crew, or hear of them.
The knight, alas ! was so far gone with wine,
And th' other three, that I refused their boat,
And took the hapless woman in another,
Who cannot but be sunk, whatever fortune
Hath wrought upon the others' desperate lives.

Enter Petronel, *and* Seagull, *bareheaded.*

Pe. : Zounds ! captain, I tell thee, we are cast up o'the coast of France. 'Sfoot ! I am not drunk still, I hope. Dost remember where we were last night ?

Sea. : No, by my troth, knight, not I ; but methinks we have been a horrible while upon the water and in the water.

Pe. : Ay me ! we are undone for ever ! Hast any money about thee ?

Sea. : Not a penny, by Heaven !

Pe. : Not a penny betwixt us, and cast ashore in France !

Sea. : 'Faith I cannot tell that ; my brains nor mine eyes are not mine own yet.

Enter two Gentlemen.

Pe. : 'Sfoot ! wilt not believe me ? I know't by th' elevation of the pole, and by the altitude and latitude of the climate. See, here comes a couple of French gentlemen ; I knew we were in France ; dost thou think our Englishmen are so Frenchified, that a man knows not whether he be in France or in England,

[1] Here is a touch of Chapman's hand discernible, if nowhere else.—Ed.

when he sees 'hem? What shall we do? We must e'en to 'hem, and entreat some relief of 'hem. Life is sweet and we have no other means to relieve our lives now but their charities.

SEA. : Pray you, do you beg on 'hem then; you can speak French.

PE. : Monsieur, plaist il d'avoir pitie de nostre grande infortune. Je suis un pouvre chevalier d'Angleterre qui a souffri l'infortune de naufrage.

1ST GENT. : Un pouvre chevalier d'Angleterre?

PE. : Oui, monsieur, il est trop vray; mais vous sçaves bien nous sommes toutes subject à fortune.

2ND GENT. : A poor knight of England?—a poor knight of Windsor, are you not? Why speak you this broken French, when y'are a whole Englishman? On what coast are you, think you?

PE. : On the coast of France, sir.

1ST GENT. : On the coast of Dogs, sir; y'are i'th' Isle of Dogs, I tell you, I see y'ave been washed in the Thames here, and I believe ye were drowned in a tavern before, or else you would never have took boat in such a dawning as this was. Farewell, farewell; we will not know you for shaming of you. I ken the man weel; he's one of my thirty-pound knights.

2ND GENT. : No, no, this is he that stole his knighthood o' the grand day for four pound giving to a page; all the money in's purse, I wot well.

[*Exeunt.*

SEA. : Death! colonel, I knew you were over-shot.

PE. : Sure I think now, indeed, Captain Seagull, we were something over-shot.

Enter QUICKSILVER.

What! my sweet Frank Quicksilver! dost thou survive to rejoice me? But what! nobody at thy heels, Frank? Ay me! what is become of poor Mistress Security?

QU. : 'Faith, gone quite from her name, as she is from her fame, I think; I left her to the mercy of the water.

SEA. : Let her go, let her go! Let us go to our ship at Blackwall, and shift us.

PE. : Nay, by my troth, let our clothes rot upon us, and let us rot in them; twenty to one our ship is attached by this time! If we set her not under sail this last tide, I never looked for any other. Woe, woe is me! what shall become of us? The last money we could make, the greedy Thames has devoured; and if our ship be attached, there is no hope can relieve us.

QU. : 'Sfoot! knight, what an unknightly faintness transports thee! Let our ship sink, and all the world that's without us be taken from us, I hope I have some tricks in this brain of mine shall not let us perish.

SEA. : Well said, Frank, i'faith. O, my nimble-spirited Quicksilver! 'Fore God! would thou hadst been our colonel!

PE. : I like his spirit rarely; but I see no means he has to support that spirit.

QU. : Go to, knight! I have more means than thou art aware of. I have not lived amongst goldsmiths and goldmakers all this while, but I have learned something worthy of my time with 'hem. And not to let thee stink where thou stand'st, knight, I'll let thee know some of my skill presently.

SEA. : Do, good Frank, I beseech thee.

QU. : I will blanch copper so cunningly that it shall endure all proofs but the test: it shall endure malleation, it shall have the ponderosity of Luna, and the tenacity of Luna—by no means friable.

PE. : 'Slight! where learn'st thou these terms, trow?

QU. : Tush, knight! the terms of this art every ignorant quack-salver is perfect in; but I'll tell you how yourself shall blanch copper thus cunningly. Take arsenic, otherwise called realga (which indeed is plain ratsbane); sublime

'hem three or four times, then take the sublimate of this realga, and put 'hem into a glass, into chymia, and let them have a convenient decoction natural, four-and-twenty hours, and he will become perfectly fixed ; then take this fixed powder, and project him upon well-purged copper, *et habebis magisterium.*

Am. : Excellent, Frank, let us hug thee !

Qu. : Nay, this I will do besides. I'll take you off twelvepence from every angel, with a kind of aqua-fortis, and never deface any part of the image.

Pe. : But then it will want weight ?

Qu. : You shall restore that thus : Take your sal achime prepared, and your distilled urine, and let your angels lie in it but four-and-twenty hours, and they shall have their perfect weight again. Come on, now ; I hold this is enough to put some spirit into the livers of you ; I'll infuse more another time. We have saluted the proud air long enough with our bare sconces. Now will I have you to a wench's house of mine at London, there make shift to shift us, and after, take such fortunes as the stars shall assign us.

Am. : Notable Frank, we will ever adore thee ! [*Exeunt.*

Enter Drawer, *with* Winnifrid *new-attired.*

Wi. : Now, sweet friend, you have brought me near enough your tavern, which I desired I might with some colour be seen near, inquiring for my husband, who, I must tell you, stole thither the last night with my wet gown we have left at your friend's, which, to continue your former honest kindness, let me pray you to keep close from the knowledge of any ; and so, with all vow of your requital, let me now entreat you to leave me to my woman's wit and fortune.

Dr. : All shall be done you desire ; and so all the fortune you can wish for attend you. [*Exit* Drawer.

Enter Security.

Sec. : I will once more to this unhappy tavern before I shift one rag of me more ; that I may there know what is left behind, and what news of their passengers. I have bought me a hat and band with the little money I had about me, and made the streets a little leave staring at my night-cap.

Wi. : O, my dear husband ! where have you been to-night ? All night abroad at taverns ! Rob me of my garments ! and fare as one run away from me ! Alas ! is this seemly for a man of your credit, of your age, and affection to your wife ?

Sec. : What should I say ?—how miraculously sorts this !—was not I at home, and called thee last night ?

Wi. : Yes, sir, the harmless sleep you broke ; and my answer to you would have witnessed it, if you had had the patience to have stayed and answered me ; but your so sudden retreat made me imagine you were gone to Master Bramble's, and so rested patient and hopeful of your coming again, till this your unbelieved absence brought me abroad with no less than wonder, to seek you where the false knight had carried you.

Sec. : Villain and monster that I was ! how have I abused thee ! I was suddenly gone indeed ; for my sudden jealousy transferred me. I will say no more but this : Dear wife, I suspected thee.

Wi. : Did you suspect me ?

Sec. : Talk not of it, I beseech thee ; I am ashamed to imagine it. I will home, I will home ; and every morning on my knees ask thee heartily forgiveness. [*Exeunt.*

Slit. : Now will I descend my honourable prospect ; the farthest seeing sea-mark of the world ; no marvel, then, if I could see two miles about me. I

hope the red tempest's anger be now over-blown, which sure, I think Heaven sent as a punishment for profaning holy Saint Luke's memory with so ridiculous a custom. Thou dishonest satire! farewell to honest married men, farewell to all sorts and degrees of thee! Farewell thou horn of hunger, that call'st th' inns a court to their manger! Farewell, thou horn of abundance, that adornest the headsmen of the common-wealth! Farewell, thou horn of direction, that is the city lanthorn! Farewell, thou horn of pleasure, the ensign of the huntsman! Farewell, thou horn of destiny, th' ensign of the married man! Farewell, thou horn tree, that bearest nothing but stone-fruit! [*Exit.*

SCENE II

Enter TOUCHSTONE.

To. : Ha, sirrah! thinks my knight adventurer we can no point of our compass? Do we not know north-north-east, north-east-and-by-east, east-and-by-north? nor plain eastward? Ha! have we never heard of Virginia? nor the Cavallaria? nor the Colonoria? Can we discover no discoveries? Well, mine errant Sir Flash, and my runagate Quicksilver, you may drink drunk, crack cans, hurl away a brown dozen of Monmouth caps or so, in sea ceremony to your *bon voyage*; but for reaching any coast, save the coast of Kent or Essex, with this tide, or with this fleet, I'll be your warrant for a Gravesend toast. There's that gone afore will stay your admiral and vice-admiral and rear-admiral, were they all (as they are) but one pinnace, and under sail, as well as a Remora, doubt it not; and from this sconce, without either powder or shot. Work upon that now. Nay, and you'll show tricks, we'll vie with you a little. My daughter, his lady, was sent eastward by land, to a castle of his, i' the air (in what region I know not), and, as I hear, was glad to take up her lodging in her coach, she and her two waiting-women, her maid, and her mother, like three snails in a shell, and the coachman a-top on 'hem, I think. Since they have all found the way back again by Weeping Cross; but I'll not see 'hem. And for two on 'hem, madam and her malkin, they are like to bite o' the bridle for William, as the poor horses have done all this while that hurried 'hem, or else go graze o' the common. So should my Dame Touchstone too; but she has been my cross these thirty years, and I'll now keep her to fright away sprites, i'faith. I wonder I hear no news of my son Golding. He was sent for to the Guildhall this morning betimes, and I marvel at the matter; if I had not laid up comfort and hope in him, I should grow desperate of all. See! he is come i' my thought. How now, son? What news at the Court of Aldermen?

Enter GOLDING.

Go. : Troth, sir, an accident somewhat strange, else it hath little in it worth the reporting.

To. : What? it is not borrowing of money, then?

Go. : No, sir; it hath pleased the worshipful commoners of the city to take me one i' their number at presentation of the inquest——

To. : Ha!

Go. : And the alderman of the ward wherein I dwell to appoint me his deputy—

To. : How?

Go. : In which place I have had an oath ministered me, since I went.

To. : Now, my dear and happy son, let me kiss thy new worship, and a little boast mine own happiness in thee. What a fortune was it (or rather my judgment, indeed) for me, first to see that in his disposition which a whole city so conspires to second! Ta'en into the livery of his company the first

day of his freedom! Now (not a week married) chosen commoner and alderman's deputy in a day! Note but the reward of a thrifty course. The wonder of his time! Well, I will honour Master Alderman for this act (as becomes me), and shall think the better of the Common Council's wisdom and worship while I live, for thus meeting, or but coming after me, in the opinion of his desert. Forward, my sufficient son! and as this is the first, so esteem it the least step to that high and prime honour that expects thee.

Go. : Sir, as I was not ambitious of this, so I covet no higher place; it hath dignity enough, if it will but save me from contempt; and I had rather my bearing in this or any other office should add worth to it, than the place give the least opinion to me.

To. : Excellently spoken! This modest answer of thine blushes, as if it said, I will wear scarlet shortly. Worshipful son! I cannot contain myself, I must tell thee; I hope to see thee one o' the monuments of our city, and reckoned among her worthies to be remembered the same day with the Lady Ramsey and grave Gresham, when the famous fable of Whittington and his puss shall be forgotten, and thou and thy acts become the posies for hospitals; when thy name shall be written upon conduits, and thy deeds played i' thy lifetime by the best companies of actors, and be called their get-penny. This I divine. This I prophesy.

Go. : Sir, engage not your expectation farther than my abilities will answer; I, that know mine own strength, fear 'hem; and there is so seldom a loss in promising the least, that commonly it brings with it a welcome deceit. I have other news for you, sir.

To. : None more welcome, I am sure?

Go. : They have their degree of welcome, I dare affirm. The colonel and all his company, this morning putting forth drunk from Billingsgate, and like to have been cast away o' this side o' Greenwich; and (as I have intelligence by a false brother) are come dropping to town like so many masterless men, i' their doublets and hose, without hat, or cloak, or any other——

To. : A miracle! the justice of Heaven! Where are they? let's go presently and lay for 'hem.

Go. : I have done that already, sir, both by constables and other officers, who shall take 'hem at their old Anchor, and with less tumult or suspicion than if yourself were seen in't—and under colour of a great press that is now abroad and they shall here be brought afore me.

To. : Prudent and politic son! Disgrace 'hem all that ever thou canst; their ship I have already arrested. How to my wish it falls out, that thou hast the place of a justicer upon 'hem! I am partly glad of the injury done to me, that thou mayst punish it. Be severe i' thy place, like a new officer o' the first quarter, unreflected. You hear how our lady is come back with her train, from the invisible castle?

Go. : No; where is she?

To. : Within; but I ha' not seen her yet, nor her mother, who now begins to wish her daughter undubbed, they say, and that she had walked a foot-pace with her sister. Here they come; stand back.

TOUCHSTONE, MISTRESS TOUCHSTONE, GERTRUDE, GOLDING, MILDRED, SYNDEFIE.

God save your ladyship—save your good ladyship! Your ladyship is welcome from your inchanted castle, so are your beauteous retinue. I hear your knight errant is travelled on strange adventures. Surely, in my mind, your ladyship hath "fished fair, and caught a frog," as the saying is.

MIST. T. : Speak to your father, madam, and kneel down.

GE. : Kneel ? I hope I am not brought so low yet ; though my knight be run away, and has sold my land, I am a lady still.

TO. : Your ladyship says true, madam ; and it is fitter and a greater decorum, that I should curtsey to you that are a knight's wife, and a lady, than you be brought a your knees to me, who am a poor cullion and your father.

GE. : Law !—my father knows his duty.

MIST T. : O child !

TO. : And therefore I do desire your ladyship, my good Lady Flash, in all humility, to depart my obscure cottage, and return in quest of your bright and most transparent castle, however presently concealed to mortal eyes. And as for one poor woman of your train here, I will take that order, she shall no longer be a charge unto you, nor help to spend your ladyship ; she shall stay at home with me, and not go abroad, nor put you to the pawning of an odd coach-horse or three wheels, but take part with the Touchstone. If we lack, we will not complain to your ladyship. And so, good madam, with your damosel here, please you to let us see your straight backs in equipage ; for truly here is no roost for such chickens as you are, or birds o' your feather, if it like your ladyship.

GE. : Marry, fist o' your kindness ! I thought as much. Come away, Syn, we shall as soon get a fart from a dead man, as a farthing of courtesy here.

MI. : O, good sister !

GE. : Sister, sir—reverence ! Come away, I say, hunger drops out at his nose.

GO. : O, madam, " Fair words never hurt the tongue."

GE. : How say you by that ? You come out with your gold ends now !

MIST. T. : Stay, lady-daughter ; good husband !

TO. : Wife, no man loves his fetters, be they made of gold. I list not ha' my head fastened under my child's girdle ; as she has brewed, so let her drink, a God's name. She went witless to wedding, now she may go wisely a-begging. It's but honeymoon yet with her ladyship ; she has coach-horses, apparel, jewels, yet left ; she needs care for no friends, nor take knowledge of father, mother, brother, sister, or anybody. When those are pawned or spent, perhaps we shall return into the list of her acquaintance.

GE. : I scorn it, i'faith. Come, Syn. [*Exit* GERTRUDE.

MIST. T. : O madam, why do you provoke your father thus ?

TO. : Nay, nay ; e'en let pride go afore, shame will follow after, I warrant you. Come, why dost thou weep now ? Thou art not the first good cow hast had an ill calf, I trust. What's the news with that fellow ?

Enter CONSTABLE.

GO. : Sir, the knight and your man Quicksilver are without ; will you ha' 'hem brought in ?

TO. : O, by any means. And, son, here's a chair ; appear terrible unto 'hem on the first interview. Let them behold the melancholy of a magistrate, and taste the fury of a citizen in office.

GO. : Why, sir, I can do nothing to 'hem, except you charge 'hem with somewhat.

TO. : I will charge 'hem and recharge 'hem, rather than authority should want foil to set it off.

GO. : No, good sir, I will not.

TO. : Son, it is your place ; by any means——

GO. : Believe it, I will not, sir.

Enter KNIGHT, PETRONEL, QUICKSILVER, CONSTABLE, OFFICERS.

PE. : How misfortune pursues us still in our misery !

Qu. : Would it had been my fortune to have been trussed up at Wapping, rather than ever ha' come here !

Pe. : Or mine, to have famished in the island !

Qu. : Must Golding sit upon us ?

Co. : You might carry an M. under your girdle to Master Deputy's worship.

Go. : What are those, Master Constable ?

Co. : And't please your worship, a couple of masterless men I pressed for the Low Countries, sir.

Go. : Why do you not carry 'hem to Bridewell, according to your order, they may be shipped away ?

Co. : An't please your worship, one of 'hem says he is a knight ; and we thought good to show him to your worship, for our discharge.

Go. : Which is he ?

Co. : This, sir.

Go. : And what's the other ?

Co. : A knight's fellow, sir, an't please you.

Go. : What ! a knight and his fellow thus accoutred ? Where are their hats and feathers, their rapiers and their cloaks ?

Qu. : O, they mock us.

Co. : Nay, truly, sir, they had cast both their feathers and hats too, before we see 'hem. Here's all their furniture, an't please you, that we found. They say knights are now to be known without feathers, like cockerels by their spurs, sir.

Go. : What are their names, say they ?

To. : Very well this. He should not take knowledge of 'hem in his place, indeed.

Co. : This is Sir Petronel Flash.

To. : How !

Co. : And this, Francis Quicksilver.

To. : Is't possible ? I thought your worship had been gone for Virginia, sir ; you are welcome home, sir. Your worship has made a quick return, it seems, and no doubt a good voyage. Nay, pray you be covered, sir. How did your biscuit hold out, sir ? Methought I had seen this gentleman afore—good Master Quicksilver ! How a degree to the southward has changed you !

Go. : Do you know 'hem, father ? Forbear your offers a little, you shall be heard anon.

To. : Yes, Master Deputy ; I had a small venture with them in the voyage—a thing called a son-in-law, or so. Officers, you may let 'hem stand alone, they will not run away ; I'll give my word for them. A couple of very honest gentlemen. One of 'hem was my prentice, Master Quicksilver here ; and when he had two year to serve, kept his whore and his hunting nag, would play his hundred pound at gresco, or primero, as familiarly (and all a' my purse) as any bright piece of crimson on 'hem all ; had his changeable trunks of apparel standing at livery with his mare, his chest of perfumed linen, and his bathing-tubs, which when I told him of, why he !—he was a gentleman, and I a poor Cheapside groom. The remedy was, we must part. Since when, he hath had the gift of gathering up some small parcels of mine, to the value of five-hundred pound, dispersed among my customers, to furnish this his Virginian venture ; wherein this knight was the chief, Sir Flash—one that married a daughter of mine, ladyfied her, turned two-thousand pounds' worth of good land of hers into cash within the first week, bought her a new gown and a coach ; sent her to seek her fortune by land, whilst himself prepared for his fortune by sea ; took in fresh flesh at Billingsgate, for his own diet, to serve him the whole voyage—the wife of a certain

usurer called Security, who hath been the broker for 'hem in all this business. Please, Master Deputy, work upon that now.

Go. : If my worshipful father have ended.

Yo. : I have, it shall please Master Deputy.

Go. : Well then, under correction——

Yo. : Now, son, come over 'hem with some fine gird, as thus, " Knight, you shall be encountered," that is, had to the Counter ; or, " Quicksilver, I will put you into a crucible," or so.

Go. : Sir Petronel Flash, I am sorry to see such flashes as these proceed from a gentleman of your quality and rank ; for mine own part, I could wish I could say I could not see them ; but such is the misery of magistrates and men in place, that they must not wink at offenders. Take him aside : I will hear you anon, sir.

Yo. : I like this well, yet ; there's some grace i' the knight left—he cries.

Go. : Francis Quicksilver, would God thou hadst turned quacksalver, rather than run into these dissolute and lewd courses ! It is great pity ; thou art a proper young man, of an honest and clean face, somewhat near a good one ; God hath done his part in thee ; but thou hast made too much, and been too proud of that face, with the rest of thy body ; for maintenance of which in neat and garish attire, only to be looked upon by some light housewives, thou hast prodigally consumed much of thy master's estate ; and being by him gently admonished at several times, hast returned thyself haughty and rebellious in thine answers, thundering out uncivil comparisons, requiting all his kindness with a coarse and harsh behaviour ; never returning thanks for any one benefit, but receiving all as if they had been debts to thee, and no courtesies. I must tell thee, Francis, these are manifest signs of an ill-nature ; and God doth often punish such pride and *outrecuidance* with scorn and infamy, which is the worst of misfortune. My worshipful father, what do you please to charge them withal ? From the press I will free 'hem, Master Constable.

Go. : Then I'll leave your worship, sir.

Go. : No, you may stay ; there will be other matters against 'hem.

Go. : Sir, I do charge this gallant, Master Quicksilver, on suspicion of felony and the knight as being accessary in the receipt of my goods.

Qu. : O God, sir !

Go. : Hold thy peace, impudent varlet, hold thy peace ! With what forehead or face dost thou offer to chop logic with me, having run such a race of riot as thou hast done ? Does not the sight of this worshipful man's fortune and temper confound thee, that was thy younger fellow in household, and now come to have the place of a judge upon thee ? Dost not observe this ? Which of all thy gallants and gamesters, thy swearers and thy swaggerers, will come now to moan thy misfortune, or pity thy penury ? They'll look out at a window, as thou ridest in triumph to Tyburn, and cry, " Yonder goes honest Frank, mad Quicksilver ! " " He was a free boon companion, when he had money," says one ; " Hang him, fool ! " says another ; " he could not keep it when he had it ! " " A pox o'th' cullion, his master," says a third, " he has brought him to this " ; when their pox of pleasure, and their piles of perdition, would have been better bestowed upon thee, that hast ventured for 'hem with the best, and by the clue of thy knavery brought thyself weeping to the cart of calamity.

Qu. : Worshipful master !

Go. : Offer not to speak, crocodile ; I will not hear a sound come from thee. Thou hast learnt to whine at the play yonder. Master Deputy, pray you commit 'hem both to safe custody, till I be able farther to charge 'hem.

Qu. : O me ! what an unfortunate thing am I !

Pe. : Will you not take Security, sir ?

To. : Yes, marry, will I, Sir Flash, if I can find him, and charge him as deep as the best on you. He has been the plotter of all this ; he is your enginer, I hear. Master Deputy, you'll dispose of these. In the meantime, I'll to my lord mayor, and get his warrant to seize that serpent Security into my hands, and seal up both house and goods to the king's use or my satisfaction.

Go. : Officers, take 'hem to the Counter.

Qu., Pe. : O God !

To. : Nay, on, on ! you see the issue of your sloth. Of sloth cometh pleasure, of pleasure cometh riot, of riot comes whoring, of whoring comes spending, of spending comes want, of want comes theft, of theft comes hanging ; and there is my Quicksilver fixed. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I

Enter Gertrude *and* Syndefie.

Ge. : Ah, Syn ! hast thou ever read i'the chronicle of any lady, and her waiting woman driven to that extremity that we are, Syn ?

Sy. : Not I, truly, madam ; and if I had, it were but cold comfort should come out of books now.

Ge. : Why, good faith, Syn, I could dine with a lamentable story, now. *O hone, hone, o no nera ! &c.* Canst thou tell n'er a one, Syn ?

Sy. : None but mine own, madam, which is lamentable enough : first to be stolen from my friends, which were worshipful and of good accompt, by a prentice, in the habit and disguise of a gentleman, and here brought up to London, and promised marriage, and now likely to be forsaken, for he is in possibility to be hanged !

Ge. : Nay, weep not, good Syn ; my Petronel is in as good possibility as he. Thy miseries are nothing to mine, Syn ; I was more than promised marriage, Syn ; I had it, Syn ; and was made a lady ; and by a knight, Syn ; which is now as good as no knight, Syn. And I was born in London, which is more than brought up, Syn ; and already forsaken, which is past likelihood, Syn ; and instead of land i' the country, all my knight's living lies i' the counter, Syn ; there's his castle now !

Sy. : Which he cannot be forced out of, madam.

Ge. : Yes, if he would live hungry a week or two. "Hunger," they say, "breaks stone walls." But he is e'en well enough served, Syn, that so soon as ever he had got my hand to the sale of my inheritance, run away from me, and I had been his punk, God bless us ! Would the knight o' the sun, or Palmerin of England, have used their ladies so, Syn ? or Sir Lancelot ? or Sir Tristram ?

Sy. : I do not know, madam.

Ge. : Then thou knowest nothing, Syn. Thou art a fool, Syn. The knighthood nowadays are nothing like the knighthood of old time. They rid a-horseback ; ours go a-foot. They were attended by their squires ; ours by their lackeys. They went buckled in their armour ; ours muffled in their cloaks. They travelled wildernesses and deserts ; ours dare scarce walk the streets. They were still pressed to engage their honour ; ours still ready to pawn their clothes. They would gallop on at sight of a monster ; ours run away at sight of a sergeant. They would help poor ladies ; ours make poor ladies.

Sy. : Ay, madam, they were knights of the Round Table at Winchester, that

sought adventures ; but these of the Square Table at ordinaries, that sit at hazard.

GE. : Try, Syn, let him vanish. And tell me, what shall we pawn next ?

SY. : Ay, marry, madam, a timely consideration ; for our hostess (profane woman !) has sworn by bread and salt, she will not trust us another meal.

GE. : Let it stink in her hand then. I'll not be beholding to her. Let me see, my jewels be gone, and my gowns, and my red velvet petticoat that I was married in, and my wedding silk stockings, and all thy best apparel, poor Syn ! Good faith, rather than thou shouldest pawn a rag more, I'd lay my ladyship in lavender—if I knew where.

SY. : Alas, madam, your ladyship !

GE. : Ay,—why ?—you do not scorn my ladyship, though it is in a waistcoat ? God's my life ! you are a peat indeed ! Do I offer to mortgage my ladyship for you and for your avail, and do you turn the lip and the alas to my ladyship ?

SY. : No, madam ; but I make question who will lend anything upon it ?

GE. : Who ?—marry, enow, I warrant you, if you'll seek 'hem out. I'm sure I remember the time when I would ha' given one thousand pounds (if I had had it) to have been a lady ; and I hope I was not bred and born with that appetite alone : some other gentle-born o' the city have the same longing, I trust. And for my part, I would afford 'hem a penn'orth ; my ladyship is little the worse for the wearing, and yet I would bate a good deal of the sum. I would lend it (let me see) for forty pound in hand, Syn, that would apparel us ; and ten pound a year, that would keep me and you, Syn (with our needles) ; and we should never need to be beholding to our scurvy parents. Good Lord ! that there are no fairies nowadays, Syn !

SY. : Why, madam ?

GE. : To do miracles, and bring ladies money. Sure, if we lay in a cleanly house, they would haunt it, Syn. I'll try. I'll sweep the chamber soon at night, and set a dish of water o' the hearth. A fairy may come, and bring a pearl or a diamond. We do not know, Syn. Or, there may be a pot of gold hid o' the backside, if we had tools to dig for't ? Why may not we two rise early i' the morning, Syn, afore anybody is up, and find a jewel i' the streets worth a hundred pound ? May not some great court-lady, as she comes from revels at midnight, look out of her coach as 'tis running, and lose such a jewel, and we find it ? Ha ?

SY. : They are pretty waking dreams, these.

GE. : Or may not some old usurer be drunk overnight, with a bag of money, and leave it behind him on a stall ? For God's sake, Syn, let's rise to-morrow by break of day, and see. I protest, law, if I had as much money as an alderman, I would scatter some on't i'th' streets for poor ladies to find, when their knights were laid up. And, now I remember my song o' the Golden Shower, why may not I have such a fortune ? I'll sing it, and try what luck I shall have after it.

" Fond fables tell of old,
How Jove in Danäe's lap
Fell in a shower of gold,
By which she caught a clap ;
O had it been my hap
(How ere the blow doth threaten),
So well I like the play,
That I could wish all day
And night to be so beaten."

Enter MISTRESS TOUCHSTONE.

O here's my mother ! good luck, I hope.
Ha' you brought any money, mother ?
Pray you, mother, your blessing. Nay, sweet mother, do not weep.

MIST. T. : God bless you ! I would I were in my grave !

GE. : Nay, dear mother, can you steal no more money from my father ? Dry your eyes, and comfort me. Alas ! it is my knight's fault, and not mine, that I am in a waistcoat, and attired thus simply.

MIST. T. : Simply, 'tis better than thou deservest. Never whimper for the matter. " Thou shouldst have looked before thou hadst leapt." Thou wert afire to be a lady, and now your ladyship and you may both blow at the coal, for aught I know, " Self do, self have." " The hasty person never wants woe," they say.

GE. : Nay, then, mother, you should ha' looked to it. A body would think you were the older ; I did but my kind, I. He was a knight, and I was fit to be a lady. 'Tis not lack of liking, but lack of living, that severs us. And you talk like yourself and a cittiner in this, i'faith. You show what husband you come on, I wis. You smell the Touchstone—he that will do more for his daughter that he has married a scurvy gold-end man and his prentice, than he will for his t'other daughter, that has wedded a knight and his customer. By this light, I think he is not my legitimate father.

SY. : O, good madam, do not take up your mother so !

MIST. T. : Nay, nay, let her e'en alone. Let her ladyship grieve me still, with her bitter taunts and terms. I have not dole enough to see her in this miserable case, I—without her velvet gowns, without ribands, without jewels, French-wires, or cheat-bread, or quails, or a little dog, or a gentleman-usher, or anything, indeed, that's fit for a lady——

SY. : Except her tongue.

MIST. T. : And I not able to relieve her, neither, being kept so short by my husband. Well, God knows my heart ; I did little think that ever she should have had need of her sister Golding.

GE. : Why, mother, I ha' not yet. Alas ! good mother, be not intoxicate for me ; I am well enough ; I would not change husbands with my sister, I. " The leg of a lark is better than the body of a kite."

MIST. T. : I know that : but——

GE. : What, sweet mother, what ?

MIST. T. : It's but ill food when nothing's left but the claw.

GE. : That's true, mother. Ay me !

MIST. T. : Nay, sweet lady-bird, sigh not. Child, madam—why do you weep thus ? Be of good cheer ; I shall die if you cry, and mar your complexion thus.

GE. : Alas, mother, what should I do ?

MIST. T. : Go to thy sister's, child ; she'll be proud thy ladyship will come under her roof. She'll win thy father to release thy knight, and redeem thy gowns, and thy coach, and thy horses, and set thee up again.

GE. : But will she get him to set my knight up too ?

MIST. T. : That she will, or anything else thou'lt ask her.

GE. : I will begin to love her if I thought she would do this.

MIST. T. : Try her, good chuck, I warrant thee.

GE. : Dost thou think she'll do't ?

SY. : Ay, madam, and be glad you will receive it.

MIST. T. : That's a good maiden ; she tells you true. Come, I'll take order for your debts i' the ale-house.

GE. : Go, Syn, and pray for thy Frank, as I will for my Pet.

Enter TOUCHSTONE, GOLDING, WOLF.

To. : I will receive no letters, Master Wolf ; you shall pardon me.

Go. : Good father, let me entreat you.

To. : Son Golding, I will not be tempted ; I find mine own easy nature, and I know not what a well-penned subtle letter may work upon it ; there may be tricks, packing, do you see ? Return with your packet, sir.

Wo. : Believe it, sir, you need fear no packing here ; these are but letters of submission all.

To. : Sir, I do look for no submission. I will bear myself in this like blind Justice. Work upon that now. When the sessions come they shall hear from me.

Go. : From whom come your letters, Master Wolf ?

Wo. : And't please you, sir, one from Sir Petronel, another from Francis Quicksilver, and a third from old Security, who is almost mad in prison. There are two to your worship ; one from Master Francis, sir, another from the knight.

To. : I do wonder, Master Wolf, why you should travail thus, in a business so contrary to kind, or the nature o' your place : that you, being the keeper of a prison, should labour the release of your prisoners ; whereas, methinks, it were far more natural and kindly in you to be ranging about for more, and not let these 'scape you have already under the tooth. But they say you Wolves, when you ha' sucked the blood, once that they are dry, you ha' done.

Wo. : Sir, your worship may descant as you please o' my name ; but I protest I was never so mortified with any men's discourse or behaviour in prison ; yet I have had of all sorts of men i' the kingdom under my keys ; and almost of all religions i' the land, as Papist, Protestant, Puritan, Brownist, Anabaptist, Millenary, Family-o'-Love, Jew, Turk, Infidel, Atheist, Good-Fellow, &c.

Go. : And which of all these, thinks Master Wolf, was the best religion ?

Wo. : Troth, Master Deputy, they that pay fees best : we never examine their conscience farther.

Go. : I believe you, Master Wolf. Good faith, sir, here's a great deal of humility i' these letters.

Wo. : Humility, sir ? Ay, were your worship an eye-witness of it you would say so. The knight will i' the Knight's Ward, do what we can, sir ; and Master Quicksilver would be i' the hole if we would let him. I never knew or saw prisoners more penitent, or more devout. They will sit you up all night singing of psalms and edifying the whole prison ; only Security sings a note too high sometimes, because he lies i' the twopenny ward, far off, and cannot take his tune. The neighbours cannot rest for him, but come every morning to ask what godly prisoners we have.

To. : Which on 'hem is't is so devout—the knight or the t'other ?

Wo. : Both, sir ; but the young man especially. I never heard his like. He has cut his hair too. He is so well given, and has such good gifts, he can tell you almost all the stories of the Book of Martyrs, and speak you all the Sick Man's Salve without book.

To. : Ay, if he had had grace—he was brought up where it grew, I wis. On, Master Wolf.

Wo. : And he has converted one Fangs, a sergeant, a fellow could neither write nor read ; he was called the Bandog o' the Counter ; and he has brought him already to pare his nails and say his prayers ; and 'tis hoped he will sell his place shortly, and become an intelligencer.

To. : No more ; I am coming already. If I should give any farther care I were taken. Adieu, good Master Wolf. Son, I do feel mine own weaknesses ; do not importune me. Pity is a rheum that I am subject to ; but I will resist it. Master Wolf, " Fish is cast away that is cast in dry pools." Tell hypocrisy it will not do ; I have touched and tried too often ; I am yet proof, and I will remain so ; when the sessions come they shall hear from me. In the meantime, to all suits, to all entreaties, to all letters, to all tricks, I will be deaf as an adder, and blind as a beetle, lay mine ear to the ground, and lock mine eyes i' my hand, against all temptations. [*Exit.*

Go. : You see, Master Wolf, how inexorable he is. There is no hope to recover him. Pray you commend me to my brother knight, and to my fellow Francis ; present 'hem with this small token of my love ; tell 'hem, I wish I could do 'hem any worthier office ; but in this, 'tis desperate : yet I will not fail to try the uttermost of my power for 'hem. And, sir, as far as I have any credit with you, pray you let 'hem want nothing ; though I am not ambitious they should know so much.

Wo. : Sir, both your actions and words speak you to be a true gentleman. They shall know only what is fit, and no more. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Holdfast, Bramble, Security.

Ho. : Who would you speak with, sir ?

Br. : I would speak with one Security, that is prisoner here.

Ho. : Y' are welcome, sir. Stay there, I'll call him to you. Master Security !

Sec. : Who calls ?

Ho. : Here's a gentleman would speak with you.

Sec. : What is he ? Is't one that grafts my forehead now I am in prison, and comes to see how the horns shoot up and prosper ?

Ho. : You must pardon him, sir ; the old man is a little crazed with his imprisonment.

Sec. : What say you to me, sir ? Look you here, my learned counsel, Master Bramble ! cry you mercy, sir ! When saw you my wife ?

Br. : She is now at my house, sir ; and desired me that I would come to visit you, and inquire of you your case, that we might work some means to get you forth.

Sec. : My case, Master Bramble, is stone walls and iron grates ; you see it, this is the weakest part on't. And for getting me forth, no means but hang myself, and so to be carried forth, from which they have here bound me in intolerable bands.

Br. : Why, but what is't you are in for, sir ?

Sec. : For my sins, for my sins, sir, whereof marriage is the greatest. O, had I never married, I had never known this purgatory, to which hell is a kind of cool bath in respect ; my wife's confederacy, sir, with old Touchstone, that she might keep her jubilee and the feast of her new moon. Do you understand me, sir ?

Enter Quicksilver.

Qu. : Good sir, go in and talk with him. The light does him harm, and his example will be hurtful to the weak prisoners. Fie ! father Security, that you'll be still so profane ! Will nothing humble you ?

Enter two Prisoners, *with a* Friend.

Fr. : What's he ?

1st Pr. : O, he is a rare young man ! Do you not know him ?

'R. : Not I. I never saw him, I can remember.

ND PR. : Why, it is he that was the gallant prentice of London—Master Touchstone's man.

'R. : Who ?—Quicksilver ?

ST. PR. : Ay, this is he.

'R. : Is this he ? They say he has been a gallant indeed.

ST PR. : O, the royallest fellow that ever was bred up i' the city ! He would play you his thousand pound a-night at dice ; keep knights' and lords' company ; go with them to bawdy-houses ; had his six men in a livery ; kept a stable of hunting-horses, and his wench in her velvet gown and her cloth of silver. Here's one knight with him here in prison.

'R. : And how miserably he is changed !

ST PR. : O, that's voluntary in him : he gave away all his rich clothes as soon as ever he came in here among the prisoners ; and will eat o' the basket, for humility.

'R. : Why will he do so ?

ST PR. : Alas, he has no hope of life ! He mortifies himself. He does but linger on till the sessions.

ND PR. : O, he has penned the best thing, that he calls his *Repentance* or his *Last Farewell*, that ever you heard. He is a pretty poet ; and for prose—you would wonder how many prisoners he has helped out, with penning petitions for 'hem, and not take a penny. Look ! this is the knight in the rug gown. Stand by.

Enter PETRONEL, BRAMBLE, QUICKSILVER, WOLF.

BR. : Sir, for Security's case, I have told him. Say he should be condemned to be carted or whipt for a bawd, or so, why, I'll lay an execution on him o' two hundred pound ; let him acknowledge a judgment, he shall do it in half an hour ; they shall not all fetch him out without paying the execution o' my word.

'E. : But can we not be bailed, Master Bramble ?

BR. : Hardly ; there are none of the judges in town, else you should remove yourself (in spite of him) with a *habeas corpus*. But if you have a friend to deliver your tale sensibly to some justice o' the town, that he may have feeling of it (do you see), you may be bailed ; for as I understand the case, 'tis only done *in terrorem* ; and you shall have an action of false imprisonment against him when you come out, and perhaps a thousand pound costs.

Enter MASTER WOLF.

QU. : How now, Master Wolf ?—what news ?—what return ?

WO. : 'Faith, bad all : yonder will be no letters received. He says the sessions shall determine it. Only, Master Deputy Golding commends him to you, and with this token wishes he could do you other good.

QU. : I thank him. Good Master Bramble, trouble our quiet no more ; do not molest us in prison thus, with your winding devices ; pray you depart. For my part, I commit my cause to Him that can succour me ; let God work His will. Master Wolf, I pray you let this be distributed among the prisoners, and desire 'hem to pray for us.

WO. : It shall be done, Master Francis.

ST PR. : An excellent temper !

ND PR. : Now God send him good luck ! [*Exeunt.*

'E. : But what said my father-in-law, Master Wolf ?

Enter HOLDFAST.

HO. : Here's one would speak with you, sir.

Wo. : I'll tell you anon, Sir Petronel ; who is't ?
Ho. : A gentleman, sir, that will not be seen.

Enter GOLDING.

Wo. : Where is he ? Master Deputy ! your worship is welcome——
Go. : Peace !
Wo. : Away, sirrah !
Go. : Good faith, Master Wolf, the estate of these gentlemen, for whom you were so late and willing a suitor, doth much affect me ; and because I am desirous to do them some fair office, and find there is no means to make my father relent so likely as to bring him to be a spectator of their miseries, I have ventured on a device, which is, to make myself your prisoner : entreating you will presently go report it to my father, and (feigning an action at suit of some third person) pray him by this token, that he will presently, and with all secrecy, come hither for my bail ; which train, if any, I know will bring him abroad ; and then, having him here, I doubt not but we shall be all fortunate in the event.
Wo. : Sir, I will put on my best speed to effect it. Please you come in.
Go. : Yes ; and let me rest concealed, I pray you.
Wo. : See here a benefit truly done, when it is done timely, freely, and to no ambition. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV

Enter TOUCHSTONE, WIFE, DAUGHTERS, SYNDEFIE, WINNIFRID.

To. : I will sail by you, and not hear you, like the wise Ulysses.
MI. : Dear father !
MIST. T. : Husband !
GE. : Father !
WI. and SY. : Master Touchstone !
To. : Away, sirens, I will immure myself against your cries, and lock myself up to your lamentations.
MIST. T. : Gentle husband, hear me !
GE. : Father, it is I, father ; my Lady Flash. My sister and I am friends.
MI. : Good father !
WI. : Be not hardened, good Master Touchstone !
SY. : I pray you, sir, be merciful !
To. : I am deaf ; I do not hear you ; I have stopped mine ears with shoemakers' wax, and drunk Lethe and mandragora to forget you. All you speak to me I commit to the air.

Enter WOLF.

MI. : How now, Master Wolf ?
Wo. : Where's Master Touchstone ? I must speak with him presently ; I have lost my breath for haste.
MI. : What's the matter, sir ? Pray all be well !
Wo. : Master Deputy Golding is arrested upon an execution, and desires him presently to come to him, forthwith.
MI. : Ay me ! do you hear, father ?
To. : Tricks, tricks, confederacy, tricks ! I have 'hem in my nose—I scent 'hem !
Wo. : Who's that ? Master Touchstone ?
MIST. T. : Why, is it Master Wolf himself, husband.
MI. : Father !
To. : I am deaf still, I say. I will neither yield to the song of the siren nor the

voice of the hyena, the tears of the crocodile nor the howling o' the Wolf. Avoid my habitation, monsters!

Wo. : Why, you are not mad, sir? I pray you look forth, and see the token I have brought you, sir.

Go. : Ha! what token is it?

Wo. : Do you know it, sir?

Go. : My son Golding's ring! Are you in earnest, Master Wolf?

Wo. : Ay, by my faith, sir. He is in prison, and required me to use all speed and secrecy to you.

Go. : My cloak, there (pray you be patient). I am plagued for my austerity. My cloak! At whose suit, Master Wolf?

Wo. : I'll tell you as we go, sir. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FRIEND, PRISONERS.

Fr. : Why, but is his offence such as he cannot hope of life?

1 Pr. : Troth, it should seem so; and 'tis great pity, for he is exceeding penitent.

Fr. : They say he is charged but on suspicion of felony yet.

2nd Pr. : Ay, but his master is a shrewd fellow; he'll prove great matter against him.

Fr. : I'd as lieve as anything I could see his *Farewell*.

1 Pr. : O, 'tis rarely written; why, Toby may get him to sing it to you; he's not curious to anybody.

2nd Pr. : O no! He would that all the world should take knowledge of his repentance, and thinks he merits in't the more shame he suffers.

1 Pr. : Pray thee, try what thou canst do.

2nd Pr. : I warrant you he will not deny it, if he be not hoarse with the often repeating of it. [*Exit.*

1 Pr. : You never saw a more courteous creature than he is, and the knight too: the poorest prisoner of the house may command 'hem. You shall hear a thing admirably penned.

Fr. : Is the knight any scholar too?

1 Pr. : No, but he will speak very well, and discourse admirably of running horses and White-Friars, and against bawds; and of cocks; and talk as loud as a hunter, but is none.

Enter WOLF *and* TOUCHSTONE.

Wo. : Please you, stay here; I'll call his worship down to you.

1 Pr. : See, he has brought him, and the knight too; salute him, I pray. Sir, this gentleman, upon our report, is very desirous to hear some piece of your *Repentance*.

Enter QUICKSILVER, PETRONEL, *&c.*

Qu. : Sir, with all my heart; and, as I told Master Toby, I shall be glad to have any man a witness of it. And the more openly I profess it, I hope it will appear the heartier, and the more unfeigned.

Go. : Who is this?—my man Francis, and my son-in-law?

Qu. : Sir, it is all the testimony I shall leave behind me to the world, and my master that I have so offended.

Fr. : Good, sir!

Qu. : I writ it when my spirits were oppressed.

Pe. : Ay, I'll be sworn for you, Francis.

Qu. : It is in imitation of Mannington's, he that was hanged at Cambridge, that cut off the horse's head at a blow.

FR. : So, sir !
QU. : To the tune of " I wail in woe, I plunge in pain."
PE. : An excellent ditty it is, and worthy of a new tune.
QU. : In Cheapside, famous for gold and plate,
Quicksilver I did dwell of late ;
I had a master good and kind,
That would have wrought me to his mind.
He bade me still, Work upon that,
But, alas ! I wrought I knew not what.
He was a Touchstone black, but true,
And told me still what would ensue ;
Yet woe is me ! I would not learn ;
I saw, alas ! but could not discern !
FR. : Excellent, excellent well !
GO. : O let him alone : he is taken already.
QU. : I cast my coat and cap away,
I went in silks and satins gay ;
False metal of good manners I
Did daily coin unlawfully.
I scorn'd my master, being drunk ;
I kept my gelding and my punk ;
And with a knight, Sir Flash by name,
Who now is sorry for the same.
PE. : I thank you, Francis.
QU. : I thought by sea to run away,
But Thames and tempest did me stay.
TO. : This cannot be feigned, sure. Heaven pardon my severity ! " The ragged colt may prove a good horse."
GO. : How he listens, and is transported ! He has forgot me.
QU. : Still " Eastward-ho " was all my word :
But westward I had no regard,
Nor never thought what would come after,
As did, alas ! his youngest daughter.
At last the black ox trod o' my foot,
And I saw then what 'long'd unto 't ;
Now cry I, " Touchstone, touch me still,
And make me current by thy skill."
TO. : And I will do it, Francis.
WO. : Stay him, Master Deputy ; now is the time : we shall lose the song else.
FR. : I protest it is the best that ever I heard.
QU. : How like you it, gentlemen ?
ALL : O admirable, sir !
QU. : This stanze now following, alludes to the story of Mannington, from whence I took my project for my invention.
FR. : Pray you go on, sir.
QU. : O Mannington, thy stories show,
Thou cut'st a horse-head off at a blow !
But I confess, I have not the force
For to cut off the head of a horse ;
Yet I desire this grace to win,
That I may cut off the horse-head of Sin,
And leave his body in the dust
Of sin's highway and bogs of lust,
Whereby I may take Virtue's purse,

And live with her for better, for worse.

R. : Admirable, sir, and excellently conceited !

U. : Alas, sir !

O. : Son Golding and Master Wolf, I thank you : the deceit is welcome, especially from thee, whose charitable soul in this hath shown a high point of wisdom and honesty. Listen, I am ravished with his repentance, and could stand here a whole prenticeship to hear him.

R. : Forth, good sir.

U. : This is the last, and the *Farewell*.

Farewell, Cheapside, farewell, sweet trade
Of Goldsmiths all, that never shall fade ;
Farewell, dear fellow prentices all,
And be you warned by my fall :
Shun usurers, bawds, and dice, and drabs,
Avoid them as you would French scabs.
Seek not to go beyond your tether,
But cut your thongs unto your leather ;
So shall you thrive by little and little,
'Scape Tyburn Counters, and the Spital !

O. : And 'scape them shalt thou, my penitent and dear Francis !

U. : Master !

E. : Father !

O. : I can no longer forbear to do your humility right. Arise, and let me honour your repentance with the hearty and joyful embraces of a father and friend's love. Quicksilver, thou hast eat into my breast, Quicksilver, with the drops of thy sorrow, and killed the desperate opinion I had of thy reclaim.

U. : O, sir, I am not worthy to see your worshipful face !

E. : Forgive me, father.

O. : Speak no more ; all former passages are forgotten ; and here my word shall release you. Thank this worthy brother, and kind friend, Francis.— Master Wolf, I am their bail. [*A shout in the prison.*

EG. : Master Touchstone ! Master Touchstone !

O. : Who's that ?

O. : Security, sir.

EG. : Pray you, sir, if you'll be won with a song, hear my lamentable tune too :

SONG.

O Master Touchstone,
My heart is full of woe ;
Alas, I am a cuckold !
And why should it be so ?
Because I was a usurer
And bawd, as all you know,
For which, again I tell you,
My heart is full of woe.

O. : Bring him forth, Master Wolf, and release his bands. This day shall be sacred to mercy and the mirth of this encounter in the Counter. See, we are encountered with more suitors !

nter MISTRESS TOUCHSTONE, GERTRUDE, MILDRED, SYNDEFIE, WINNIFRID, *&c.*

Save your breath, save your breath ! All things have succeeded to your wishes ; and we are heartily satisfied in their events.

E. : Ah, runaway, runaway ! have I caught you ? And how has my poor knight done all this while ?

E. : Dear lady-wife, forgive me !

GE. : As heartily as I would be forgiven, knight. Dear father, give me your blessing, and forgive me too ; I ha' been proud and lascivious, father ; and a fool, father ; and being raised to the state of a wanton coy thing, called a lady, father ; have scorned you, father, and my sister, and my sister's velvet cap too ; and would make a mouth at the city as I rid through it ; and stop mine ears at Bow-bell. I have said your beard was a base one, father ; and that you looked like Twierpipe the taberer ; and that my mother was but my midwife.

MIST. T. : Now, God forgi' you, child madam !

TO. : No more repetitions. What else is wanting to make our harmony full ?

GO. : Only this, sir, that my fellow Francis make amends to Mistress Syndefie with marriage.

QU. : With all my heart.

GO. : And Security give her a dower, which shall be all the restitution he shall make of that huge mass he hath so unlawfully gotten.

TO. : Excellently devised ! a good motion ! What says Master Security ?

SEC. : I say anything, sir, what you'll ha' me say. Would I were no cuckold !

WI. : Cuckold, husband ? Why, I think this wearing of yellow has infected you.

TO. : Why, Master Security, that should rather be a comfort to you than a corasive. If you be a cuckold, it's an argument you have a beautiful woman to your wife ; then you shall be much made of ; you shall have store of friends, never want money ; you shall be eased of much o' your wedlock pain ; others will take it for you. Besides, you being a usurer (and likely to go to hell), the devils will never torment you : they'll take you for one o' their own race. Again, if you be a cuckold, and know it not, you are an innocent ; if you know it and endure it, a true martyr.

SEC. : I am resolved, sir. Come hither, Winny.

TO. : Well, then, all are pleased, or shall be anon. Master Wolf, you look hungry, methinks ; have you no apparel to lend Francis to shift him ?

QU. : No, sir, nor I desire none ; but here make it my suit, that I may go home through the streets in these, as a spectacle, or rather an example to the children of Cheapside.

TO. : Thou hast thy wish. Now, London, look about,
And in this moral see thy glass run out :
Behold the careful father, thrifty son,
The solemn deeds which each of us have done ;
The usurer punish'd, and from fall so steep
The prodigal child reclaim'd, and the lost sheep. [*Exeunt.*

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c. 1610

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY

(By FRANCIS BEAUMONT and JOHN FLETCHER)

The firm—so to speak—of Beaumont and Fletcher consisted of Francis Beaumont (1584–1616) and John Fletcher (1579–1625). The slightly junior partner, and profounder poet, addressing their mutual friend, Ben Jonson,

uring an enforced absence from London, in 1609, utters words that will echo n a sigh down the ages :

> what things have we seen,
> Done at the Mermaid ! heard words that have been
> So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,
> As if that every one from whence they came,
> Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
> And had resolv'd to live a fool, the rest
> Of his dull life. . . .

During the period of the historic partnership, Beaumont and Fletcher " lived ogether on the Banke-side, not far from the Playhouse, both batchelors . . . had ne wench in the house between them . . . the same cloaths and cloake, etc., etween them," and wrote half a dozen masterpieces between them. In the ircumstances, it is hardly surprising that scholars to this day have failed to dis- inguish precisely between their respective shares in the joint undertaking. 'robably the authors, if some spiritual communication could be established, vould be unable to enlighten us on the subject, assuming they were willing to nake the attempt—which is unlikely. Collaboration among the Elizabethans vas a communion, and, if we don't like it, we must be content to like the roducts.

The Maid's Tragedy is on the Shakespearean scale. It was produced bout 1610. The atmosphere and intrigue were probably suggested by a Court ather nearer home than Rhodes.

Beaumont, an aristocrat, was born at Grace-Dieu, Leicestershire ; Fletcher, parson's son, at Rye in Sussex. Beaumont was an Oxford man, Fletcher Cambridge. Both died in London.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY

Characters

KING

LYSIPPUS, *Brother to the King*
AMINTOR, *a noble Gentleman*
MELANTIUS, DIPHILUS, } *Brothers to Evadne*
CALIANAX, *an old humorous Lord, and Father to Aspatia*
CLEON, STRATO, } *Gentlemen*
DIAGORAS, *a Servant to Calianax*
EVADNE, *Sister to Melantius*

ASPATIA, *troth-plight Wife to Amintor*
ANTIPHILA, OLYMPIAS, } *Waiting-Gentlewomen to Aspatia*
DULA, *Waiting-woman to Evadne*
LADIES

NIGHT,
CYNTHIA,
NEPTUNE,
ÆOLUS,
SEA GODS, } *Masquers*

Scene.—THE CITY OF RHODES

ACT I

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter CLEON, STRATO, LYSIPPUS, *and* DIPHILUS.

CLEON : The rest are making ready, sir.
LYS. : So let them ;
There's time enough.
DIPH. : You are the brother to the king, my lord ;
We'll take your word.

LYS. : Strato, thou hast some skill in poetry :
What think'st thou of the masque ? will it be well ?
STRAT. : As well as masque can be.
LYS. : As masque can be ?
STRAT. : Yes ; they must commend their king, and speak in praise
Of the assembly ; bless the bride and bridegroom
In person of some god. They are tied to rules
Of flattery.
CLE. : See, good my lord, who is return'd !

Enter MELANTIUS.

LYS. : Noble Melantius ! the land, by me,
Welcomes thy virtues home to Rhodes.
Thou, that with blood abroad buy'st us our peace !
The breath of kings is like the breath of gods ;
My brother wish'd thee here, and thou art here.
He will be too kind, and weary thee
With often welcomes. But the time doth give thee
A welcome above his, or all the world's.
MEL. : My lord, my thanks ; but these scratch'd limbs of mine
Have spoke my love and truth unto my friends,
More than my tongue e'er could. My mind's the same
It ever was to you : Where I find worth,
I love the keeper till he let it go,
And then I follow it.
DIPH. : Hail, worthy brother !
He that rejoices not at your return
In safety, is mine enemy for ever.
MEL. : I thank thee, Diphilus. But thou art faulty ;
I sent for thee to exercise thine arms
With me at Patria : Thou camest not, Diphilus ;
'Twas ill.
DIPH. : My noble brother, my excuse
Is my king's strict command ; which you, my lord,
Can witness with me.
LYS. : 'Tis true, Melantius ;
He might not come, till the solemnity
Of this great match was past.
DIPH. : Have you heard of it ?
MEL. : Yes. I have given cause to those that envy
My deeds abroad, to call me gamesome :
I have no other business here at Rhodes.
LYS. : We have a masque to-night, and you must tread
A soldier's measure.
MEL. : These soft and silken wars are not for me :
The music must be shrill, and all confused,
That stirs my blood ; and then I dance with arms.
But is Amintor wed ?
DIPH. : This day.
MEL. : All joys upon him ! for he is my friend.
Wonder not that I call a man so young my friend :
His worth is great ; valiant he is, and temperate ;
And one that never thinks his life his own,

If his friend need it. When he was a boy,
As oft as I returned (as, without boast,
I brought home conquest) he would gaze upon me,
And view me round, to find in what one limb
The virtue lay to do those things he heard.
Then would he wish to see my sword, and feel
The quickness of the edge, and in his hand
Weigh it : He oft would make me smile at this.
His youth did promise much, and his ripe years
Will see it all perform'd.

Enter ASPATIA.

Hail, maid and wife !
Thou fair Aspatia, may the holy knot
That thou hast tied to-day, last till the hand
Of age undo it ! may'st thou bring a race
Unto Amintor, that may fill the world
Successively with soldiers !

ASP. : My hard fortunes
Deserve not scorn ; for I was never proud
When they were good. [*Exit.*

MEL. : How's this ?

LYS. : You are mistaken,
For she is not married.

MEL. : You said Amintor was.

DIPH. : 'Tis true ; but——

MEL. : Pardon me, I did receive
Letters at Patria from my Amintor,
That he should marry her.

DIPH. : And so it stood
In all opinion long ; but your arrival
Made me imagine you had heard the change.

MEL. : Who hath he taken then ?

LYS. : A lady, sir,
That bears the light about her, and strikes dead
With flashes of her eye : the fair Evadne,
Your virtuous sister.

MEL. : Peace of heart betwixt them !
But this is strange.

LYS. : The king my brother did it
To honour you : and these solemnities
Are at his charge.

MEL. : 'Tis royal, like himself. But I am sad
My speech bears so unfortunate a sound
To beautiful Aspatia. There is rage
Hid in her father's breast, Calianax,
Bent long against me ; and he should not think,
If I could call it back, that I would take
So base revenges, as to scorn the state
Of his neglected daughter. Holds he still
His greatness with the king ?

LYS. : Yes. But this lady
Walks discontented, with her watery eyes

Bent on the earth. The unfrequented woods
Are her delight ; and when she sees a bank
Stuck full of flowers, she with a sigh will tell
Her servants what a pretty place it were
To bury lovers in ; and make her maids
Pluck 'em, and strew her over like a corse.
She carries with her an infectious grief,
That strikes all her beholders ; she will sing
The mournful'st things that ever ear hath heard,
And sigh, and sing again ; and when the rest
Of our young ladies, in their wanton blood,
Tell mirthful tales in course, that fill the room
With laughter, she will, with so sad a look,
Bring forth a story of the silent death
Of some forsaken virgin, which her grief
Will put in such a phrase, that, ere she end,
She'll send them weeping, one by one, away.

MEL. : She has a brother under my command,
Like her ; a face as womanish as hers ;
But with a spirit that hath much outgrown
The number of his years.

Enter AMINTOR.

CLE. : My lord, the bridegroom !

MEL. : I might run fiercely, not more hastily,
Upon my foe. I love thee well, Amintor ;
My mouth is much too narrow for my heart ;
I joy to look upon those eyes of thine ;
Thou art my friend, but my disorder'd speech
Cuts off my love.

AMIN. : Thou art Melantius ;
All love is spoke in that. A sacrifice,
To thank the gods Melantius is return'd
In safety ! Victory sits on his sword,
As she was wont : May she build there and dwell ;
And may thy armour be, as it hath been,
Only thy valour and thine innocence !
What endless treasures would our enemies give,
That I might hold thee still thus !

MEL. : I am but poor
In words ; but credit me, young man, thy mother
Could do no more but weep for joy to see thee
After long absence : All the wounds I have
Fetch'd not so much away, nor all the cries
Of widowed mothers. But this is peace,
And that was war.

AMIN. : Pardon, thou holy god
Of marriage bed, and frown not, I am forced,
In answer of such noble tears as those,
To weep upon my wedding-day.

MEL. : I fear thou'rt grown too fickle ; for I hear
A lady mourns for thee ; men say, to death ;
Forsaken of thee ; on what terms I know not.

AMIN. : She had my promise ; but the king forbade it,
And made me make this worthy change, thy sister,
Accompanied with graces far above her ;
With whom I long to lose my lusty youth,
And grow old in her arms.
MEL. : Be prosperous !

Enter MESSENGER.

MESS. : My lord, the masquers rage for you.
LYS. : We are gone. Cleon, Strato, Diphilus—

[*Exeunt* LYSIPPUS, CLEON, STRATO, *and* DIPHILUS.

AMIN. : We'll all attend you.—We shall trouble you
With our solemnities.
MEL. : Not so, Amintor :
But if you laugh at my rude carriage
In peace, I'll do as much for you in war,
When you come thither. Yet I have a mistress
To bring to your delights ; rough though I am,
I have a mistress, and she has a heart
She says ; but, trust me, it is stone, no better ;
There is no place that I can challenge in't.
But you stand still, and here my way lies.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*A large Hall in the same, with a Gallery full of Spectators.*

Enter CALIANAX, *with* DIAGORAS *at the Door.*

CAL. : Diagoras, look to the doors better for shame ; you let in all the world, and anon the king will rail at me—why, very well said—by Jove, the king will have the show i' th' court.
DIAG. : Why do you swear so, my lord ? You know, he'll have it here.
CAL. : By this light, if he be wise, he will not.
DIAG. : And if he will not be wise, you are forsworn.
CAL. : One may wear out his heart with swearing, and get thanks on no side. I'll be gone—look to't who will.
DIAG. : My lord, I shall never keep them out. Pray, stay ; your looks will terrify them.
CAL. : My looks terrify them, you coxcombly ass, you ! I'll be judged by all the company whether thou hast not a worse face than I.
DIAG. : I mean, because they know you and your office.
CAL. : Office ! I would I could put it off ; I am sure I sweat quite through my office. I might have made room at my daughter's wedding ; they have near kill'd her among them ; and now I must do service for him that hath forsaken her. Serve that will.

[*Exit.*

DIAG. : He's so humorous since his daughter was forsaken—Hark, hark ! there, there ! so, so ! Codes, codes ! (*Knock within.*) What now ?
MEL. (*within*) : Open the door.
DIAG. : Who's there ?
MEL. (*within*) : Melantius.

DIAG. : I hope your lordship brings no troop with you ; for, if you do, I must return them.

[*Opens the door. Persons endeavour to rush in.*

Enter MELANTIUS *and a* LADY.

MEL. : None but this lady, sir.

DIAG. : The ladies are all placed above, save those that come in the king's troop : The best of Rhodes sit there, and there's room.

MEL. : I thank you, sir.—When I have seen you placed, madam, I must attend the king ; but, the masque done, I'll wait on you again. [*Exit with the* LADY *into the gallery.*

DIAG. : Stand back there !—Room for my lord Melantius !—pray, bear back—this is no place for such youths and their trulls—let the doors shut again.—No !—do your heads itch ? I'll scratch them for you. (*Shuts the door.*)—So, now thrust and hang (*Knocking.*)—Again ! who is't now ?—I cannot blame my Lord Calianax for going away : 'Would he were here ! he would run raging among them, and break a dozen wiser heads than his own, in the twinkling of an eye.—What's the news now ? (*Within*) : I pray you, can you help me to the speech of the master-cook ?

DIAG. : If I open the door, I'll cook some of your calves-heads. Peace, rogues ! (*Knocking.*)—Again ! who is't ?

MEL. : (*within*) : Melantius.

Enter CALIANAX.

CAL. : Let him not in.

DIAG. : O, my lord, I must.—Make room there for my lord.

Enter MELANTIUS.

Is your lady placed ? [*To* MELANTIUS.

MEL. : Yes, sir.
I thank you.—My Lord Calianax, well met.
Your causeless hate to me, I hope, is buried.

CAL. : Yes, I do service for your sister here,
That brings my own poor child to timeless death ;
She loves your friend Amintor ; such another
False-hearted lord as you.

MEL. : You do me wrong,
A most unmanly one, and I am slow
In taking vengeance ! But be well advised.

CAL. : It may be so.—Who placed the lady there,
So near the presence of the king ?

MEL. : I did.

CAL. : My lord, she must not sit there.

MEL. : Why ?

CAL. : The place is kept for women of more worth.

MEL. : More worth than she ? It misbecomes your age,
And place, to be thus womanish. Forbear !
What you have spoke, I am content to think
The palsy shook your tongue to.

CAL. : Why, 'tis well
If I stand here to place men's wenches.

MEL. : I shall forget this place, thy age, my safety,
And, thorough all, cut that poor sickly week,
Thou hast to live, away from thee.
CAL. : Nay, I know you can fight for your whore.
MEL. : Bate the king, and be he flesh and blood,
He lies, that says it ! Thy mother at fifteen
Was black and sinful to her.
DIAG. : Good my lord !
MEL. : Some god pluck threescore years from that fond man,
That I may kill him and not stain mine honour.
It is the curse of soldiers, that in peace
They shall be braved by such ignoble men,
As, if the land were troubled, would with tears
And knees beg succour from 'em. 'Would, that blood,
That sea of blood, that I have lost in fight,
Were running in thy veins, that it might make thee
Apt to say less, or able to maintain,
Should'st thou say more ! This Rhodes, I see, is nought
But a place privileged to do men wrong.
CAL. : Ay, you may say your pleasure.

Enter AMINTOR.

AMIN. : What vile injury
Has stirr'd my worthy friend, who is as slow
To fight with words as he is quick of hand ?
MEL. : That heap of age, which I should reverence
If it were temperate ; but testy years
Are most contemptible.
AMIN. : Good sir, forbear.
CAL. : There is just such another as yourself.
AMIN. : He will wrong you, or me, or any man,
And talk as if he had no life to lose,
Since this our match. The king is coming in :
I would not for more wealth than I enjoy,
He should perceive you raging. He did hear
You were at difference now, which hastened him.
CAL. : Make room there ! [HAUTBOYS *play within.*

Enter KING, EVADNE, ASPATIA, LORDS, *and* LADIES.

KING : Melantius, thou art welcome, and my love
Is with thee still : But this is not a place
To brabble in. Calianax, join hands.
CAL. : He shall not have my hand.
KING : This is no time
To force you to it. I do love you both :
Calianax, you look well to your office ;
And you, Melantius, are welcome home.—
Begin the masque !
MEL. : Sister, I joy to see you, and your choice.
You look'd with my eyes when you took that man :
Be happy in him ! [RECORDERS *play.*
EVAD. : O, my dearest brother !
Your presence is more joyful than this day
Can be unto me.

THE MASQUE

NIGHT *rises in mists.*

NIGHT : Our reign is come ; for in the raging sea
The sun is drown'd, and with him fell the Day.
Bright Cynthia, hear my voice ; I am the Night,
For whom thou bear'st about thy borrow'd light.
Appear ; no longer thy pale visage shroud,
But strike thy silver horns quite through a cloud
And send a beam upon my swarthy face ;
By which I may discover all the place
And persons, and how many longing eyes
Are come to wait on our solemnities.

Enter CYNTHIA.

How dull and black am I ! I could not find
This beauty without thee, I am so blind.
Methinks, they show like to those eastern streaks
That warn us hence, before the morning breaks !
Back, my pale servant, for these eyes know how
To shoot far more and quicker rays than thou.

CYNTH. : Great queen, they be a troop for whom alone
One of my clearest moons I have put on ;
A troop, that looks as if thyself and I
Had pluck'd our reins in, and our whips laid by,
To gaze upon these mortals, that appear
Brighter than we.

NIGHT : Then let us keep 'em here ;
And never more our chariots drive away.
But hold our places and outshine the day.

CYNTH. : Great queen of shadows, you are pleased to speak
Of more than may be done : We may not break
The gods' decrees ; but, when our time is come,
Must drive away, and give the day our room.
Yet, while our reign lasts, let us stretch our power
To give our servants one contented hour,
With such unwonted solemn grace and state,
As may for ever after force them hate
Our brother's glorious beams ; and wish the night
Crown'd with a thousand stars, and our cold light :
For almost all the world their service bend
To Phœbus, and in vain my light I lend ;
Gazed on unto my setting from my rise
Almost of none, but of unquiet eyes.

NIGHT : Then shine at full, fair queen, and by thy power
Produce a birth, to crown this happy hour,
Of nymphs and shepherds : Let their songs discover,
Easy and sweet, who is a happy lover.
Or, if thou woo't, then call thine own Endymion,
From the sweet flowery bed he lies upon,
On Latmus' top, thy pale beams drawn away,
And of this long night let him make a day.

CYNTH. : Thou dream'st, dark queen ; that fair boy was not mine.

Nor went I down to kiss him. Ease and wine
Have bred these bold tales : Poets, when they rage,
Turn gods to men, and make an hour an age.
But I will give a greater state and glory,
And raise to time a noble memory
Of what these lovers are. Rise, rise, I say,
Thou power of deeps ; thy surges laid away,
Neptune, great king of waters, and by me
Be proud to be commanded.

NEPTUNE *rises.*

NEPT. : Cynthia, see,
Thy word hath fetch'd me hither : Let me know
Why I ascend ?
CYNTH. : Doth this majestic show
Give thee no knowledge yet ?
NEPT. : Yes, now I see
Something intended, Cynthia, worthy thee.
Go on : I'll be a helper.
CYNTH. : Hie thee then,
And charge the wind fly from his rocky den.
Let loose thy subjects ; only Boreas,
Too foul for our intention, as he was,
Still keep him fast chain'd : we must have none here
But vernal blasts, and gentle winds appear ;
Such as blow flowers, and through the glad boughs sing
Many soft welcomes to the lusty spring :
These are our music. Next, thy watery race
Bring on in couples (we are pleased to grace
This noble night), each in their richest things
Your own deeps, or the broken vessel, brings.
Be prodigal, and I shall be as kind,
And shine at full upon you.
NEPT. : Ho ! the wind—
Commanding Æolus !

Enter ÆOLUS *out of a Rock.*

ÆOL. : Great Neptune ?
NEPT. : He.
ÆOL. : What is thy will ?
NEPT. : We do command thee free
Favonius, and thy milder winds, to wait
Upon our Cynthia ; but tie Boreas straight ;
He's too rebellious.
ÆOL. : I shall do it.
NEPT. : Do—— [*Exit* ÆOLUS *into the rock and re-enters.*
ÆOL. : Great master of the flood, and all below,
Thy full command has taken.—Ho ! the Main !
Neptune !
NEPT. : Here.
ÆOL. : Boreas has broke his chain,
And, struggling, with the rest has got away.
NEPT. : Let him alone, I'll take him up at sea ;
He will not long be thence. Go once again,

And call out of the bottoms of the main
Blue Proteus, and the rest ; charge them put on
Their greatest pearls, and the most sparkling stone
The beaten rock breeds ; till this night is done
By me a solemn honour to the moon.
Fly, like a full sail.

ÆOL. : I am gone.

CYNTH. : Dark Night,
Strike a full silence ; do a thorough right
To this great chorus ; that our music may
Touch high as Heaven, and make the east break day
At mid-night. [*Music.*

SONG

Cynthia, to thy power and thee
We obey.
Joy to this great company !
And no day
Come to steal this night away,
Till the rites of love are ended ;
And the lusty bridegroom say,
Welcome, light, of all befriended.

Pace out you watery powers below ;
Let your feet,
Like the gallies when they row,
Even beat.
Let your unknown measures, set
To the still winds, tell to all,
That gods are come, immortal, great,
To honour this great nuptial.
[*The Measure by the* SEA-GODS.

SECOND SONG

Hold back thy hours, dark Night, till we have done :
The day will come too soon ;
Young maids will curse thee if thou steal'st away,
And leav'st their losses open to the day ;
Stay, stay, and hide
The blushes of the bride !
Stay, gentle Night, and with thy darkness cover
The kisses of her lover.
Stay, and confound her tears, and her shrill cryings,
Her weak denials, vows, and often dyings ;
Stay, and hide all :
But help not, though she call.

NEPT. : Great queen of us and Heaven,
Hear what I bring to make this hour a full one,
If not o'ermeasure.

CYNTH. : Speak, sea's king.

NEPT. : The tunes my Amphitrite joys to have,
When they will dance upon the rising wave,
And court me as she sails. My Tritons, play
Music to lead a storm ; I'll lead the way. [*Measure.*

SONG

To bed, to bed ; come, Hymen, lead the bride,
And lay her by her husband's side ;
Bring in the virgins every one,
That grieve to lie alone ;
That they may kiss while they may say, a maid ;
To-morrow, 'twill be other, kiss'd, and said.
Hesperus be long a-shining,
Whilst these lovers are a-twining.

ÆOL. : Ho ! Neptune !
NEPT. : Æolus !
ÆOL. : The sea goes high,
Boreas hath raised a storm : Go and apply
Thy trident ; else, I prophesy, ere day
Many a tall ship will be cast away.
Descend with all the gods, and all their power,
To strike a calm.
CYNTH. : A thanks to every one, and to gratulate
So great a service, done at my desire,
Ye shall have many floods, fuller and higher
Than you have wished for ; no ebb shall dare
To let the day see where your dwellings are.
Now back unto your government in haste,
Lest your proud charge should swell above the waste,
And win upon the island.
NEPT. : We obey. [NEPTUNE *descends, and the* SEA-GODS.
CYNTH. : Hold up thy head, dead Night ; see'st thou not Day ?
The east begins to lighten : I must down,
And give my brother place.
NIGHT : Oh, I could frown
To see the Day, the Day that flings his light
Upon my kingdom, and contemns old Night !
Let him go on and flame ! I hope to see
Another wild-fire in his axletree ;
And all fall drench'd. But I forgot ; speak, queen.
The day grows on ; I must no more be seen.
CYNTH. : Heave up thy drowsy head again, and see
A greater light, a greater majesty,
Between our set and us ! Whip up thy team !
The day-break's here, and yon sun-flaring beam
Shot from the south. Say, which way wilt thou go ?
NIGHT : I'll vanish into mists.
CYNTH. : I into day. [*Exeunt.*

THE MASQUE ENDS.

KING : Take lights there !—Ladies, get the bride to bed.—
We will not see you laid. Good-night, Amintor ;
We'll ease you of that tedious ceremony.
Were it my case, I should think time run slow.
If thou be'st noble, youth, get me a boy,
That may defend my kingdom from my foes.

AMIN. : All happiness to you.
KING : Good night, Melantius. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*Antechamber to* EVADNE'S *Bedroom in the Palace.*

Enter EVADNE, ASPATIA, DULA, *and other* LADIES.

DULA : Madam, shall we undress you for this fight ?
The wars are nak'd that you must make to-night.
EVAD. : You are very merry, Dula.
DULA : *I should be merrier far, if 'twere*
With me as 'tis with you.
EVAD. : How's that ?
DULA : *That I might go to bed with him*
With the credit that you do.
EVAD. : Why, how now, wench ?
DULA : Come, ladies, will you help ?
EVAD. : I am soon undone.
DULA : And as soon done :
Good store of clothes will trouble you at both.
EVAD. : Art thou drunk, Dula ?
DULA : Why, here's none but we.
EVAD. : Thou think'st belike, there is no modesty
When we're alone.
DULA : Ay, by my troth, you hit my thoughts aright.
EVAD. : You prick me, lady.
DULA : 'Tis against my will.
Anon you must endure more, and lie still ;
You're best to practise.
EVAD. : Sure, this wench is mad.
DULA : No, 'faith, this is a trick that I have had
Since I was fourteen.
EVAD. : 'Tis high time to leave it.
DULA : Nay, now I'll keep it, till the trick leave me.
A dozen wanton words, put in your head,
Will make you livelier in your husband's bed.
EVAD. : Nay, 'faith, then take it.
DULA : Take it madam ? where ?
We all, I hope, will take it, that are here.
EVAD. : Nay, then, I'll give you o'er.
DULA : So will I make
The ablest man in Rhodes, or his heart ache.
EVAD. : Wilt take my place to-night ?
DULA : I'll hold your cards 'gainst any two I know.
EVAD. : What wilt thou do ?
DULA : Madam, we'll do't, and make 'em leave play too.
EVAD. : Aspatia, take her part.
DULA : I will refuse it.
She will pluck down a side ; she does not use it.
EVAD. : Why, do.
DULA : You will find the play
Quickly, because your head lies well that way.

EVAD. : I thank thee, Dula. 'Would thou could'st instil
Some of thy mirth into Aspatia !
Nothing but sad thoughts in her breast do dwell :
Methinks, a mean betwixt you would do well.
DULA : She is in love : Hang me, if I were so,
But I could run my country. I love, too,
To do those things that people in love do.
ASP. : It were a timeless smile should prove my cheek :
It were a fitter hour for me to laugh,
When at the altar the religious priest
Were pacifying the offended powers
With sacrifice, than now. This should have been
My night ; and all your hands have been employed
In giving me a spotless offering
To young Amintor's bed, as we are now
For you. Pardon, Evadne ; 'would my worth
Were great as yours, or that the king, or he,
Or both, thought so ! Perhaps he found me worthless :
But, till he did so, in these ears of mine,
These credulous ears, he pour'd the sweetest words
That art or love could frame. If he were false,
Pardon it, Heaven ! and if I did want
Virtue, you safely may forgive that too ;
For I have lost none that I had from you.
EVAD. : Nay, leave this sad talk, madam.
ASP. : Would I could !
Then should I leave the cause.
EVAD. : See, if you have not spoil'd all Dula's mirth.
ASP. : Thou think'st thy heart hard ; but if thou be'st caught,
Remember me ; thou shalt perceive a fire
Shot suddenly into thee.
DULA : That's not so good ; let 'em shoot anything
But fire, I fear 'em not.
ASP. : Well, wench, thou may'st be taken.
EVAD. : Ladies, good-night : I'll do the rest myself.
DULA : Nay, let your lord do some.
ASP. (*sings*) : *Lay a garland on my hearse,*
Of the dismal yew.
EVAD. : That's one of your sad songs, madam.
ASP. : Believe me, 'tis a very pretty one.
EVAD. : How is it, madam ?

SONG

ASP. : Lay a garland on my hearse,
Of the dismal yew ;
Maidens, willow branches bear ;
Say I died true :
My love was false, but I was firm
From my hour of birth.
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth !

EVAD. : Fie on't madam ! The words are so strange, they are able to make one dream of hobgoblins. " I could never have the power : " Sing that, Dula.

SONG

DULA : I could never have the power
To love one above an hour,
But my heart would prompt mine eye
On some other man to fly ;
Venus, fix mine eyes fast,
Or if not, give me all that I shall see at last.

EVAD. : So leave me now.
DULA : Nay, we must see you laid.
ASP. : Madam, good-night. May all the marriage joys
That longing maids imagine in their beds,
Prove so unto you ! May no discontent
Grow 'twixt your love and you ! But, if there do,
Inquire of me, and I will guide your moan ;
Teach you an artificial way to grieve,
To keep your sorrow waking. Love your lord
No worse than I : but if you love so well,
Alas, you may displease him ; so did I.
This is the last time you shall look on me.—
Ladies, farewell. As soon as I am dead,
Come all, and watch one night about my hearse ;
Bring each a mournful story, and a tear,
To offer at it when I go to earth.
With flatt'ring ivy clasp my coffin round ;
Write on my brow my fortune ; let my bier
Be borne by virgins that shall sing, by course,
The truth of maids, and perjuries of men.
EVAD. : Alas, I pity thee. [*Exit* EVADNE.
ALL : Madam, good-night.
1 LADY : Come, we'll let in the bridegroom.
DULA : Where's my lord ?

Enter AMINTOR.

1 LADY : Here, take this light.
DULA : You'll find her in the dark.
1 LADY : Your lady's scarce a-bed yet ; you must help her.
ASP. : Go, and be happy in your lady's love.
May all the wrongs, that you have done to me,
Be utterly forgotten in my death !
I'll trouble you no more ; yet I will take
A parting kiss, and will not be denied.
You'll come, my lord, and see the virgins weep
When I am laid in earth, though you yourself
Can know no pity. Thus I wind myself
Into this willow garland, and am prouder
That I was once your love, though now refused,
Than to have had another true to me.
So with my prayers I leave you, and must try
Some yet-unpractised way to grieve and die. [*Exit.*
DULA : Come, ladies, will you go ?
ALL : Good-night, my lord.
AMIN. : Much happiness unto you all !— [*Exeunt* LADIES.
I did that lady wrong : Methinks, I feel

Her grief shoot suddenly through all my veins.
Mine eyes run : This is strange at such a time.
It was the king first moved me to't ;—but he
Has not my will in keeping.—Why do I
Perplex myself thus ? Something whispers me,
" Go not to bed." My guilt is not so great
As mine own conscience, too sensible,
Would make me think : I only break a promise,
And 'twas the king that forced me.—Timorous flesh,
Why shak'st thou so ?—Away, my idle fears !

Enter EVADNE.

Yonder she is, the lustre of whose eye
Can blot away the sad remembrance
Of all these things.—Oh, my Evadne, spare
That tender body ; let it not take cold.
The vapours of the night will not fall here :
To bed, my love. Hymen will punish us
For being slack performers of his rites.
Cam'st thou to call me ?

EVAD. : No.

AMIN. : Come, come, my love,
And let us lose ourselves to one another.
Why art thou up so long ?

EVAD. : I am not well.

AMIN. : To bed, then ; let me wind thee in these arms,
Till I have banish'd sickness.

EVAD. : Good my lord,
I cannot sleep.

AMIN. : Evadne, we will watch ;
I mean no sleeping.

EVAD. : I'll not go to bed.

AMIN. : I pr'ythee do.

EVAD. : I will not for the world.

AMIN. : Why, my dear love ?

EVAD. : Why ? I have sworn I will not.

AMIN. : Sworn !

EVAD. : Ay.

AMIN. : How ! sworn, Evadne ?

EVAD. : Yes, sworn, Amintor ; and will swear again,
If you will wish to hear me.

AMIN. : To whom have you sworn this ?

EVAD. : If I should name him, the matter were not great.

AMIN. : Come, this is but the coyness of a bride.

EVAD. : The coyness of a bride ?

AMIN. : How prettily that frown becomes thee !

EVAD. : Do you like it so ?

AMIN. : Thou canst not dress thy face in such a look,
But I shall like it.

EVAD. : What look likes you best ?

AMIN. : Why do you ask ?

EVAD. : That I may show you one less pleasing to you.

AMIN. : How's that ?

EVAD. : That I may show you one less pleasing to you.

AMIN. : I pr'ythee, put thy jests in milder looks ;
It shows as thou wert angry.
EVAD. : So, perhaps,
I am indeed.
AMIN. : Why, who has done thee wrong ?
Name me the man, and by thyself I swear,
Thy yet-unconquer'd self, I will revenge thee.
EVAD. : Now I shall try thy truth. If thou dost love me,
Thou weigh'st not anything compared with me :
Life, honour, joys eternal, all delights
This world can yield, or hopeful people feign,
Or in the life to come, are light as air
To a true lover when his lady frowns,
And bids him *do this*. Wilt thou kill this man ?
Swear, my Amintor, and I'll kiss the sin
Off from thy lips.
AMIN. : I will not swear, sweet love,
Till I do know the cause.
EVAD. : I would thou would'st.
Why, it is thou that wrong'st me ; I hate thee ;
Thou should'st have kill'd thyself.
AMIN. : If I should know that, I should quickly kill
The man you hated.
EVAD. : Know it then, and do't.
AMIN. : Oh, no ; what look soe'er thou shalt put on
To try my faith, I shall not think thee false :
I cannot find one blemish in thy face,
Where falsehood should abide. Leave, and to bed.
If you have sworn to any of the virgins,
That were your old companions, to preserve
Your maidenhead a night, it may be done
Without this means.
EVAD. : A maidenhead, Amintor,
At my years ?
AMIN. : Sure, she raves !—This cannot be
Thy natural temper. Shall I call thy maids ?
Either thy healthful sleep hath left thee long,
Or else some fever rages in thy blood.
EVAD. : Neither, Amintor : Think you I am mad,
Because I speak the truth ?
AMIN. : Will you not lie with me to-night ?
EVAD. : To-night ! you talk as if I would hereafter.
AMIN. : Hereafter ! yes, I do.
EVAD. : You are deceived.
Put off amazement, and with patience mark
What I shall utter ; for the oracle
Knows nothing truer : 'tis not for a night,
Or two, that I forbear thy bed, but for ever.
AMIN. : I dream ! Awake, Amintor !
EVAD. : You hear right.
I sooner will find out the beds of snakes,
And with my youthful blood warm their cold flesh,
Letting them curl themselves about my limbs,
Than sleep one night with thee. This is not feign'd,

Nor sounds it like the coyness of a bride.
AMIN. : Is flesh so earthly to endure all this ?
Are these the joys of marriage ? Hymen, keep
This story (that will make succeeding youth
Neglect thy ceremonies) from all ears ;
Let it not rise up, for thy shame and mine,
To after-ages : We will scorn thy laws,
If thou no better bless them. Touch the heart
Of her that thou hast sent me, or the world
Shall know, there's not an altar that will smoke
In praise of thee ; we will adopt us sons ;
Then virtue shall inherit, and not blood.
If we do lust, we'll take the next we meet,
Serving ourselves as other creatures do ;
And never take note of the female more,
Nor of her issue.—I do rage in vain ;
She can but jest. O, pardon me, my love !
So dear the thoughts are that I hold of thee,
That I must break forth. Satisfy my fear ;
It is a pain, beyond the hand of death,
To be in doubt : Confirm it with an oath,
If this be true.
EVAD. : Do you invent the form :
Let there be in it all the binding words
Devils and conjurers can put together,
And I will take it. I have sworn before,
And here, by all things holy, do again,
Never to be acquainted with thy bed.
Is your doubt over now ?
AMIN. : I know too much. Would I had doubted still !
Was ever such a marriage night as this !
Ye powers above, if you did ever mean
Man should be used thus, you have thought a way
How he may bear himself, and save his honour.
Instruct me in it ; for to my dull eyes
There is no mean, no moderate course to run :
I must live scorn'd, or be a murderer.
Is there a third ? Why is this night so calm ?
Why does not Heaven speak in thunder to us,
And drown her voice ?
EVAD. : This rage will do no good.
AMIN. : Evadne, hear me : Thou hast ta'en an oath,
But such a rash one, that, to keep it, were
Worse than to swear it : Call it back to thee ;
Such vows as those never ascend the Heaven ;
A tear or two will wash it quite away.
Have mercy on my youth, my hopeful youth,
If thou be pitiful ; for, without boast,
This land was proud of me. What lady was there,
That men call'd fair and virtuous in this isle,
That would have shunn'd my love ? It is in thee
To make me hold this worth. Oh ! we vain men,
That trust out all our reputation,
To rest upon the weak and yielding hand

Of feeble woman ! But thou art not stone ;
Thy flesh is soft, and in thine eyes doth dwell
The spirit of love ; thy heart cannot be hard.
Come, lead me from the bottom of despair,
To all the joys thou hast ; I know thou wilt ;
And make me careful, lest the sudden change
O'ercome my spirits.

EVAD. : When I call back this oath,
The pains of hell environ me !

AMIN. : I sleep, and am too temperate ! Come to bed !
Or by those hairs, which, if thou hadst a soul
Like to thy locks, were threads for kings to wear
About their arms——

EVAD. : Why, so, perhaps, they are.

AMIN. : I'll drag thee to my bed, and make thy tongue
Undo this wicked oath, or on thy flesh
I'll print a thousand wounds to let out life !

EVAD. : I fear thee not. Do what thou dar'st to me !
Every ill-sounding word, or threat'ning look,
Thou show'st to me, will be revenged at full.

AMIN. : It will not, sure, Evadne ?

EVAD. : Do not you hazard that.

AMIN. : Have you your champions ?

EVAD. : Alas, Amintor, think'st thou I forbear
To sleep with thee, because I have put on
A maiden's strictness ? Look upon these cheeks,
And thou shalt find the hot and rising blood
Unapt for such a vow. No ; in this heart
There dwells as much desire, and as much will
To put that wish'd act in practice, as ever yet
Was known to woman ; and they have been shown,
Both. But it was the folly of thy youth
To think this beauty, to what land soe'er
It shall be call'd, shall stoop to any second.
I do enjoy the best, and in that height
Have sworn to stand or die : You guess the man.

AMIN. : No : let me know the man that wrongs me so,
That I may cut his body into motes,
And scatter it before the northern wind.

EVAD. : You dare not strike him.

AMIN. : Do not wrong me so.
Yes, if his body were a poisonous plant,
That it were death to touch, I have a soul
Will throw me on him.

EVAD. : Why, it is the king.

AMIN. : The king !

EVAD. : What will you do now ?

AMIN. : 'Tis not the king !

EVAD. : What did he make this match for, dull Amintor ?

AMIN. : Oh, thou hast named a word, that wipes away
All thoughts revengeful ! In that sacred name,
" The king," there lies a terror. What frail man
Dares lift his hand against it ? Let the gods

Speak to him when they please : till when let us
Suffer, and wait.

EVAD. : Why should you fill yourself so full of heat,
And haste so to my bed ? I am no virgin.

AMIN. : What devil put it in thy fancy, then,
To marry me ?

EVAD. : Alas, I must have one
To father children, and to bear the name
Of husband to me, that my sin may be
More honourable.

AMIN. : What a strange thing am I !

EVAD. : A miserable one ; one that myself
Am sorry for.

AMIN. : Why, show it then in this :
If thou hast pity, though thy love be none,
Kill me ; and all true lovers, that shall live
In after-ages cross'd in their desires,
Shall bless thy memory, and call thee good ;
Because such mercy in thy heart was found,
To rid a ling'ring wretch.

EVAD. : I must have one
To fill thy room again, if thou wert dead ;
Else, by this night, I would : I pity thee.

AMIN. : These strange and sudden injuries have fallen
So thick upon me, that I lose all sense
Of what they are. Methinks I am not wrong'd :
Nor is it aught, if from the censuring world
I can but hide it. Reputation !
Thou art a word, no more.—But thou hast shown
An impudence so high, that to the world,
I fear, thou wilt betray or shame thyself.

EVAD. : To cover shame, I took thee ; never fear
That I would blaze myself.

AMIN. : Nor let the king
Know I conceive he wrongs me ; then mine honour
Will thrust me into action, though my flesh
Could bear with patience. And it is some ease
To me in these extremes, that I knew this
Before I touch'd thee ; else had all the sins
Of mankind stood betwixt me and the king,
I had gone through 'em to his heart and thine.
I have left one desire : 'tis not his crown
Shall buy me to thy bed, now I resolve,
He has dishonoured thee. Give me thy hand ;
Be careful of thy credit, and sin close ;
'Tis all I wish. Upon thy chamber-floor
I'll rest to-night, that morning-visitors
May think we did as married people use.
And, pr'ythee, smile upon me when they come,
And seem to toy, as if thou hadst been pleased
With what we did.

EVAD. : Fear not ; I will do this.

AMIN. : Come, let us practise : and as wantonly

As ever loving bride and bridegroom met,
Let's laugh and enter here.
EVAD. : I am content.
AMIN. : Down all the swellings of my troubled heart !
When we walk thus intwined, let all eyes see
If ever lovers better did agree. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the Citadel.*

Enter ASPATIA, ANTIPHILA, *and* OLYMPIAS.

ASP. : Away, you are not sad ; force it no further.
Good Gods, how well you look ! Such a full colour
Young bashful brides put on. Sure, you are new married !
ANT. : Yes, madam, to your grief.
ASP. : Alas, poor wenches !
Go learn to love first ; learn to lose yourselves ;
Learn to be flatter'd, and believe, and bless
The double tongue that did it. Make a faith
Out of the miracles of ancient lovers,
Such as speak truth, and died in't ; and, like me,
Believe all faithful, and be miserable.
Did you ne'er love yet, wenches ? Speak, Olympias ;
Thou hast an easy temper, fit for stamp.
OLYM. : Never.
ASP. : Nor you, Antiphila ?
ANT. : Nor I.
ASP. : Then, my good girls, be more than women, wise :
At least be more than I was ; and be sure
You credit anything the light gives light to,
Before a man. Rather believe the sea
Weeps for the ruin'd merchant, when he roars ;
Rather, the wind courts but the pregnant sails,
When the strong cordage cracks ; rather, the sun
Comes but to kiss the fruit in wealthy autumn,
When all falls blasted. If you needs must love,
(Forced by ill fate) take to your maiden bosoms
Two dead-cold aspicks, and of them make lovers :
They cannot flatter, nor forswear ; one kiss
Makes a long peace for all. But man,
Oh, that beast man ! Come, let's be sad, my girls !
That down-cast of thine eye, Olympias,
Shows a fine sorrow. Mark, Antiphila ;
Just such another was the nymph Œnone,
When Paris brought home Helen. Now, a tear ;
And then thou art a piece expressing fully
The Carthage queen, when, from a cold sea-rock,
Full with her sorrow, she tied fast her eyes
To the fair Trojan ships ; and, having lost them,
Just as thine eyes do, down stole a tear. Antiphila,
What would this wench do, if she were Aspatia ?
Here she would stand, till some more pitying god
Turn'd her to marble ! 'Tis enough, my wench !
Show me the piece of needlework you wrought.
ANT. : Of Ariadne, madam ?

ASP. : Yes, that piece.—
This should be Theseus ; he has a cozening face :
You meant him for a man ?
ANT. : He was so, madam.
ASP. : Why, then, 'tis well enough. Never look back :
You have a full wind, and a false heart, Theseus !
Does not the story say, his keel was split,
Or his masts spent, or some kind rock or other
Met with his vessel ?
ANT. : Not as I remember.
ASP. : It should have been so. Could the gods know this,
And not, of all their number, raise a storm ?
But they are all as ill ! This false smile
Was well express'd ; just such another caught me !
You shall not go [on] so, Antiphila :
In this place work a quicksand,
And over it a shallow smiling water,
And his ship ploughing it ; and then a Fear :
Do that Fear to the life, wench.
ANT. : 'Twill wrong the story.
ASP. : 'Twill make the story, wrong'd by wanton poets,
Live long, and be believed. But where's the lady ?
ANT. : There, madam.
ASP. : Fie ! you have miss'd it here, Antiphila ;
You are much mistaken, wench :
These colours are not dull and pale enough
To show a soul so full of misery
As this sad lady's was. Do it by me ;
Do it again, by me, the lost Aspatia,
And you shall find all true but the wild island.
Suppose I stand upon the sea-beach now,
Mine arms thus, and mine hair blown with the wind,
Wild as that desart ; and let all about me
Be teachers of my story. Do my face
(If thou hadst ever feeling of a sorrow)
Thus, thus, Antiphila : Strive to make me look
Like Sorrow's monument ! And the trees about me,
Let them be dry and leafless ; let the rocks
Groan with continual surges ; and, behind me,
Make all a desolation. Look, look, wenches !
A miserable life of this poor picture !
OLYM. : Dear madam !
ASP. : I have done. Sit down ; and let us
Upon that point fix all our eyes ; that point there.
Make a dull silence, till you feel a sudden sadness
Give us new souls.

Enter CALIANAX.

CAL. : The king may do this, and he may not do it :
My child is wrong'd, disgraced.—Well, how now, huswives !
What, at your ease ? Is this a time to sit still ?
Up, you young lazy whores, up, or I'll swinge you !
OLYM. : Nay, good my lord.

CAL. : You'll lie down shortly. Get you in, and work !
What, are you grown so resty you want heats ?
We shall have some of the court-boys heat you shortly.
ANT. : My lord, we do no more than we are charged.
It is the lady's pleasure we be thus
In grief : she is forsaken.
CAL. : There's a rogue too !
A young dissembling slave ! Well, get you in !
I'll have a bout with that boy. 'Tis high time
Now to be valiant ; I confess my youth
Was never prone that way. What, made an ass ?
A court-stale ? Well, I will be valiant,
And beat some dozen of these whelps ; I will !
And there's another of 'em, a trim cheating soldier ;
I'll maul that rascal ; he has out-braved me twice :
But now, I thank the gods, I am valiant.—
Go, get you in ! I'll take a course with all. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—*Antechamber to* EVADNE'S *Bedroom in the Palace.*

Enter CLEON, STRATA, *and* DIPHILUS.

CLE. : Your sister is not up yet.
DIPH. : Oh, brides must take their morning's rest ; the night is troublesome.
STRA. : But not tedious.
DIPH. : What odds, he has not my sister's maidenhead to-night ?
STRA. : No ; it's odds, against any bridegroom living, he ne'er gets it while he lives.
DIPH. : You're merry with my sister ; you'll please to allow me the same freedom with your mother.
STRA. : She's at your service.
DIPH. : Then she's merry enough of herself ; she needs no tickling. Knock at the door.
STRA. : We shall interrupt them.
DIPH. : No matter ; they have the year before them.—Good-morrow, sister ! Spare yourself to-day ; the night will come again.

Enter AMINTOR.

AMIN. : Who's there ? my brother ! I'm no readier yet.
Your sister is but now up.
DIPH. : You look as you had lost your eyes to-night :
I think you have not slept.
AMIN. : I'faith I have not.
DIPH. : You have done better, then.
AMIN. : We ventured for a boy : When he is twelve,
He shall command against the foes of Rhodes.
Shall we be merry ?
STRA. : You cannot ; you want sleep.
AMIN. : 'Tis true.—But she, [*Aside.*
As if she had drank Lethe, or had made
Even with Heaven, did fetch so still a sleep,
So sweet and sound——

DIPH. : What's that?
AMIN. : Your sister frets.
This morning ; and does turn her eyes upon me,
As people on their headsman. She does chafe,
And kiss, and chafe again, and clap my cheeks ;
She's in another world.
DIPH. : Then I had lost : I was about to lay
You had not got her maidenhead to-night.
AMIN. : Ha ! he does not mock me? (*Aside.*)—You had lost indeed ;
I do not use to bungle.
CLEO. : You do deserve her.
AMIN. : I laid my lips to hers, and that wild breath,
That was so rude and rough to me last night,
Was sweet as April.—I'll be guilty too,
If these be the effects. [*Aside.*

Enter MELANTIUS.

MEL. : Good day, Amintor ! for, to me, the name
Of brother is too distant : We are friends.
And that is nearer.
AMIN. : Dear Melantius !
Let me behold thee. Is it possible?
MEL. : What sudden gaze is this?
AMIN. : 'Tis wond'rous strange !
MEL. : Why does thine eye desire so strict a view
Of that it knows so well? There's nothing here
That is not thine.
AMIN. : I wonder, much, Melantius,
To see those noble looks, that make me think
How virtuous thou art : And, on the sudden,
'Tis strange to me thou shouldst have worth and honour ;
Or not be base, and false, and treacherous,
And every ill. But——
MEL. : Stay, stay, my friend ;
I fear this sound will not become our loves.
No more ; embrace me.
AMIN. : Oh, mistake me not :
I know thee to be full of all those deeds
That we frail men call good ; but, by the course
Of nature, thou shouldst be as quickly changed
As are the winds ; dissembling as the sea,
That now wears brows as smooth as virgins' be,
Tempting the merchant to invade his face,
And in an hour calls his billows up,
And shoots 'em at the sun, destroying all
He carries on him.—Oh, how near am I
To utter my sick thoughts ! [*Aside.*
MEL. : But why, my friend, should I be so by nature?
AMIN. : I have wed thy sister, who hath virtuous thoughts
Enough for one whole family ; and, 'tis strange
That you should feel no want.
MEL. : Believe me, this compliment's too cunning for me.
DIPH. : What should I be then, by the course of nature,
They having both robb'd me of so much virtue?

STRA. : Oh, call the bride, my lord Amintor,
That we may see her blush, and turn her eyes down :
'Tis the prettiest sport !
AMIN. : Evadne !
EVAD. (*within*) : My lord !
AMIN. : Come forth, my love !
Your brothers do attend to wish you joy.
EVAD. : I am not ready yet.
AMIN. : Enough, enough.
EVAD. : They'll mock me.
AMIN. : 'Faith, thou shalt come in.

Enter EVADNE.

MEL. : Good-morrow, sister ! He that understands
Whom you have wed, need not to wish you joy ;
You have enough : Take heed you be not proud.
DIPH. : Oh, sister, what have you done ?
EVAD. : I done ! why, what have I done ?
STRA. : My lord Amintor swears you are no maid now.
EVAD. : Pish !
STRA. : I'faith, he does.
EVAD. : I knew I should be mock'd.
DIPH. : With a truth.
EVAD. : If 'twere to do again,
In faith, I would not marry.
AMIN. : Nor I, by heaven ! [*Aside.*
DIPH. : Sister, Dula swears
She heard you cry two rooms off.
EVAD. : Fie, how you talk !
DIPH. : Let's see you walk, Evadne. By my troth,
You are spoil'd.
MEL. : Amintor !
AMIN. : Ha ?
MEL. : Thou art sad.
AMIN. : Who, I ? I thank you for that.
Shall Diphilus, thou, and I, sing a catch ?
MEL. : How !
AMIN. : Pr'ythee, let's.
MEL. : Nay, that's too much the other way.
AMIN. : I am so lightened with my happiness !
How dost thou, love ? kiss me.
EVAD. : I cannot love you, you tell tales of me.
AMIN. : Nothing but what becomes us.—Gentlemen,
'Would you had all such wives, and all the world,
That I might be no wonder ! You are all sad :
What, do you envy me ? I walk, methinks,
On water, and ne'er sink, I am so light.
MEL. : 'Tis well you are so.
AMIN. : Well ? how can I be other,
When she looks thus ?—Is there no music there ?
Let's dance.
MEL. : Why, this is strange, Amintor !
AMIN. : I do not know myself ; yet I could wish
My joy were less.

DIPH. : I'll marry too, if it will make one thus.
EVAD. : Amintor, hark. [*Aside.*
AMIN. : What says my love?—I must obey.
EVAD. : You do it scurvily, 'twill be perceived. [*Apart to him.*
CLEO. : My lord, the king is here.

Enter KING *and* LYSIPPUS.

AMIN. : Where?
STRA. : And his brother.
KING : Good morrow, all!—
Amintor, joy on joy fall thick upon thee!
And, madam, you are alter'd since I saw you;
I must salute you; you are now another's.
How liked you your night's rest?
EVAD. : Ill, sir.
AMIN. : Ay, 'deed,
She took but little.
LYS. : You'll let her take more,
And thank her too, shortly.
KING : Amintor, wert
Thou truly honest till thou wert married?
AMIN. : Yes, sir.
KING : Tell me, then, how shows the sport unto thee?
AMIN. : Why, well.
KING : What did you do?
AMIN. : No more, nor less, than other couples use;
You know what 'tis; it has but a coarse name.
KING : But, pr'ythee, I should think, by her black eye,
And her red cheek, she should be quick and stirring
In this same business; ha?
AMIN. : I cannot tell;
I ne'er try'd other, sir; but I perceive
She is as quick as you delivered.
KING : Well, you will trust me then, Amintor,
To chuse a wife for you again?
AMIN. : No, never, sir.
KING : Why? like you this so ill?
AMIN. : So well I like her.
For this I bow my knee in thanks to you,
And unto heaven will pay my grateful tribute
Hourly; and do hope we shall draw out
A long contented life together here,
And die both, full of grey hairs, in one day:
For which the thanks are yours. But if the powers
That rule us please to call her first away,
Without pride spoke, this world holds not a wife
Worthy to take her room.
KING : I do not like this.—All forbear the room,
But you, Amintor, and your lady.
[*Exeunt all but the* KING, AMINTOR, *and* EVADNE.
I have some speech with you, that may concern
Your after living well.
AMIN. (*aside*) : He will not tell me that he lies with her?
If he do, something heavenly stay my heart,

For I shall be apt to thrust this arm of mine
To acts unlawful !

KING : You will suffer me to talk with her,
Amintor, and not have a jealous pang ?

AMIN. : Sir, I dare trust my wife with whom she dares
To talk, and not be jealous.

[EVADNE *and the* KING *speak apart.*

KING : How do you like
Amintor ?

EVAD. : As I did, sir.

KING : How is that ?

EVAD. : As one that, to fulfil your will and pleasure,
I have given leave to call me wife and love.

KING : I see there is no lasting faith in sin ;
They, that break word with heaven, will break again
With all the world, and so dost thou with me.

EVAD. : How, sir ?

KING : This subtle woman's ignorance
Will not excuse you : thou hast taken oaths,
So great, methought, they did not well become
A woman's mouth, that thou wouldst ne'er enjoy
A man but me.

EVAD. : I never did swear so ;
You do me wrong.

KING : Day and night have heard it.

EVAD. : I swore indeed, that I would never love
A man of lower place ; but, if your fortune
Should throw you from this height, I bade you trust
I would forsake you, and would bend to him
That won your throne : I love with my ambition,
Not with my eyes. But, if I ever yet
Touch'd any other, leprosy light here
Upon my face ; which for your royalty
I would not stain !

KING : Why, thou dissemblest, and it is
In me to punish thee.

EVAD. : Why, 'tis in me,
Then, not to love you, which will more afflict
Your body than your punishment can mine.

KING : But thou hast let Amintor lie with thee.

EVAD. : I have not.

KING : Impudence ! he says himself so.

EVAD. : He lies.

KING : He does not.

EVAD. : By this light he does,
Strangely and basely ! and I'll prove it so.
I did not shun him for a night ; but told him,
I would never close with him.

KING : Speak lower ; 'tis false.

EVAD. : I am no man
To answer with a blow ; or, if I were,
You are the king ! But urge me not ; 'tis most true

KING : Do not I know the uncontrolled thoughts
That youth brings with him, when his blood is high

With expectation, and desire of that
He long hath waited for ? Is not his spirit,
Though he be temperate, of a valiant strain
As this our age hath known ? What could he do,
If such a sudden speech had met his blood,
But ruin thee for ever, if he had not kill'd thee ?
He could not bear it thus. He is as we,
Or any other wrong'd man.

EVAD. : 'Tis dissembling.

KING : Take him ! farewell ! henceforth I am thy foe ;
And what disgraces I can blot thee with look for.

EVAD. : Stay, sir !—Amintor !—You shall hear.—Amintor !

AMIN. (*coming forward*) : What, my love ?

EVAD. : Amintor, thou hast an ingenuous look,
And shouldst be virtuous : It amazeth me,
That thou canst make such base malicious lies !

AMIN. : What, my dear wife !

EVAD. : Dear wife ! I do despise thee.
Why, nothing can be baser than to sow
Dissension amongst lovers.

AMIN. : Lovers ! who ?

EVAD. : The king and me.

AMIN. : O, God !

EVAD. : Who should live long, and love without distaste,
Were it not for such pickthanks as thyself.
Did you lie with me ? Swear now, and be punish'd
In hell for this !

AMIN. : The faithless sin I made
To fair Aspatia, is not yet revenged ;
It follows me.—I will not lose a word
To this vile woman : But to you, my king,
The anguish of my soul thrusts out this truth,
You are a tyrant ! And not so much to wrong
An honest man thus, as to take a pride
In talking with him of it.

EVAD. : Now, sir, see
How loud this fellow lied.

AMIN. : You that can know to wrong, should know how men
Must right themselves : What punishment is due
From me to him that shall abuse my bed ?
Is it not death ? Nor can that satisfy,
Unless I send your limbs through all the land,
To show how nobly I have freed myself.

KING : Draw not thy sword : thou know'st I cannot fear
A subject's hand ; but thou shalt feel the weight
Of this, if thou dost rage.

AMIN. : The weight of that !
If you have any worth, for Heaven's sake, think
I fear not swords ; for as you are mere man,
I dare as easily kill you for this deed,
As you dare think to do it. But there is
Divinity about you, that strikes dead
My rising passions : As you are my king,

I fall before you, and present my sword
To cut mine own flesh, if it be your will.
Alas ! I am nothing but a multitude
Of walking griefs ! Yet, should I murder you,
I might before the world take the excuse
Of madness : For, compare my injuries,
And they will well appear too sad a weight
For reason to endure ! But, fall I first
Amongst my sorrows, ere my treacherous hand
Touch holy things ! But why (I know not what
I have to say) why did you chuse out me
To make thus wretched ? There were thousand fools
Easy to work on, and of state enough,
Within the island.

EVAD. : I would not have a fool ;
It were no credit for me.

AMIN. : Worse and worse !
Thou, that dar'st talk unto thy husband thus,
Profess thyself a whore, and, more than so,
Resolve to be so still—— It is my fate
To bear and bow beneath a thousand griefs,
To keep that little credit with the world !
But there were wise ones too ; you might have ta'en
Another.

KING : No ; for I believe thee honest,
As thou wert valiant.

AMIN. : All the happiness
Bestowed upon me turns into disgrace.
Gods, take your honesty again, for I
Am loaden with it !—Good my lord the king,
Be private in it.

KING : Thou may'st live, Amintor,
Free as thy king, if thou wilt wink at this,
And be a means that we may meet in secret.

AMIN. : A bawd ! Hold, hold, my breast ! A bitter curse
Seize me, if I forget not all respects
That are religious, on another word
Sounded like that ; and, through a sea of sins,
Will wade to my revenge, though I should call
Pains here, and after life, upon my soul !

KING : Well, I am resolute you lay not with her ;
And so I leave you. [*Exit* KING.

EVAD. : You must needs be prating ;
And see what follows.

AMIN. : Pr'ythee, vex me not !
Leave me : I am afraid some sudden start
Will pull a murder on me.

EVAD. : I am gone ;
I love my life well. [*Exit* EVADNE.

AMIN. : I hate mine as much.—
This 'tis to break a troth ! I should be glad,
If all this tide of grief would make me mad. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in the Palace.*

Enter MELANTIUS.

MEL. : I'll know the cause of all Amintor's griefs,
Or friendship shall be idle.

Enter CALIANAX.

CAL. : O Melantius,
My daughter will die.
MEL. : Trust me, I am sorry.
Would thou hadst ta'en her room !
CAL. : Thou art a slave,
A cut-throat slave, a bloody treacherous slave !
MEL. : Take heed, old man ; thou wilt be heard to rave,
And lose thine offices.
CAL. : I am valiant grown,
At all these years, and thou art but a slave !
MEL. : Leave ! Some company will come, and I respect
Thy years, not thee, so much, that I could wish
To laugh at thee alone.
CAL. : I'll spoil your mirth :
I mean to fight with thee. There lie, my cloak !
This was my father's sword, and he durst fight.
Are you prepared ?
MEL. : Why wilt thou dote thyself
Out of thy life ? Hence, get thee to bed !
Have careful looking-to, and eat warm things,
And trouble not me : My head is full of thoughts,
More weighty than thy life or death can be.
CAL. : You have a name in war, where you stand safe
Amongst a multitude ; but I will try
What you dare do unto a weak old man
In single fight. You will give ground, I fear.
Come, draw.
MEL. : I will not draw, unless thou pull'st thy death
Upon thee with a stroke. There's no one blow,
That thou canst give, hath strength enough to kill me.
Tempt me not so far then : The power of earth
Shall not redeem thee.
CAL. (*aside*) : I must let him alone :
He's stout and able ; and, to say the truth,
However I may set a face, and talk,
I am not valiant. When I was a youth,
I kept my credit with a testy trick
I had, 'mongst cowards, but durst never fight.
MEL. : I will not promise to preserve your life,
If you do stay.
CAL. : I would give half my land
That I durst fight with that proud man a little.
If I had men to hold him, I would beat him
Till he ask'd me mercy.
MEL. : Sir, will you be gone ?
CAL. : I dare not stay ; but I'll go home, and beat
My servants all over for this. [*Exit* CALIANAX.

MEL. : This old fellow haunts me !
But the distracted carriage of my Amintor
Takes deeply on me : I will find the cause.
I fear his conscience cries, he wrong'd Aspatia.

Enter AMINTOR.

AMIN. : Men's eyes are not so subtle to perceive
My inward misery : I bear my grief
Hid from the world. How art thou wretched then ?
For aught I know, all husbands are like me ;
And every one I talk with of his wife,
Is but a well dissembler of his woes,
As I am. 'Would I knew it ! for the rareness
Afflicts me now.
MEL. : Amintor, we have not enjoy'd our friendship of late,
For we were wont to change our souls in talk.
AMIN. : Melantius, I can tell thee a good jest
Of Strato and a lady the last day.
MEL. : How was't ?
AMIN. : Why, such an odd one !
MEL. : I have long'd to speak with you ;
Not of an idle jest, that's forced, but of matter
You are bound to utter to me.
AMIN. : What is that, my friend ?
MEL. : I have observed your words
Fall from your tongue wildly ; and all your carriage
Like one that strove to show his merry mood,
When he were ill disposed : You were not wont
To put such scorn into your speech, or wear
Upon your face ridiculous jollity.
Some sadness sits here, which your cunning would
Cover o'er with smiles, and 'twill not be.
What is it ?
AMIN. : A sadness here ! what cause
Can fate provide for me, to make me so ?
Am I not loved through all this isle ? The king
Rains greatness on me. Have I not received
A lady to my bed, that in her eye
Keeps mounting fire, and on her tender cheeks
Inevitable colour, in her heart
A prison for all virtue ? Are not you,
Which is above all joys, my constant friend ?
What sadness can I have ? No ; I am light,
And feel the courses of my blood more warm
And stirring than they were. 'Faith, marry too :
And you will feel so unexpress'd a joy
In chaste embraces, that you will indeed
Appear another.
MEL. : You may shape, Amintor,
Causes to cozen the whole world withal,
And yourself too : but 'tis not like a friend,
To hide your soul from me. 'Tis not your nature
To be thus idle : I have seen you stand
As you were blasted, 'midst of all your mirth ;

Call thrice aloud, and then start, feigning joy
So coldly !—World, what do I hear ? a friend
Is nothing. Heaven, I would have told that man
My secret sins ! I'll search an unknown land,
And there plant friendship ; all is wither'd here.
Come with a compliment ! I would have fought,
Or told my friend " he lied," ere sooth'd him so.
Out of my bosom !

AMIN. : But there is nothing——

MEL. : Worse and worse ! farewell !
From this time have acquaintance, but no friend.

AMIN. : Melantius, stay : You shall know what it is.

MEL. : See, how you play'd with friendship ! Be advised
How you give cause unto yourself to say,
You have lost a friend.

AMIN. : Forgive what I have done ;
For I am so o'ergone with injuries
Unheard of, that I lose consideration
Of what I ought to do. Oh, oh !

MEL. : Do not weep.
What is it ? May I once but know the man
Hath turn'd my friend thus !

AMIN. : I had spoke at first,
But that——

MEL. : But what ?

AMIN. : I held it most unfit
For you to know. 'Faith, do not know it yet.

MEL. : Thou see'st my love, that will keep company
With thee in tears ! hide nothing, then, from me :
For when I know the cause of thy distemper,
With mine old armour I'll adorn myself,
My resolution, and cut through my foes,
Unto thy quiet ; till I place thy heart
As peaceable as spotless innocence.
What is it ?

AMIN. : Why, 'tis this—— It is too big
To get out—— Let my tears make way awhile.

MEL. : Punish me strangely, Heaven, if he 'scape
Of life or fame, that brought this youth to this !

AMIN. : Your sister——

MEL. : Well said.

AMIN. : You will wish't unknown,
When you have heard it.

MEL. : No.

AMIN. : Is much to blame,
And to the king has given her honour up,
And lives in whoredom with him.

MEL. : How is this ?
Thou art run mad with injury, indeed ;
Thou couldst not utter this else. Speak again ;
For I forgive it freely ; tell thy griefs.

AMIN. : She's wanton : I am loth to say, " a whore,"
Though it be true.

MEL. : Speak yet again, before mine anger grow
Up, beyond throwing down : What are thy griefs ?
AMIN. : By all our friendship, these.
MEL. : What, am I tame ?
After mine actions, shall the name of friend
Blot all our family, and stick the brand
Of whore upon my sister, unrevenged ?
My shaking flesh, be thou a witness for me,
With what unwillingness I go to scourge
This railer, whom my folly hath called friend !—
I will not take thee basely ; thy sword
Hangs near thy hand ; draw it, that I may whip
Thy rashness to repentance. Draw thy sword !
AMIN. : Not on thee, did thine anger swell as high
As the wild surges. Thou shouldst do me ease
Here, and eternally, if thy noble hand
Would cut me from my sorrows.
MEL. : This is base
And fearful. They, that use to utter lies,
Provide not blows, but words, to qualify
The men they wrong'd. Thou hast a guilty cause.
AMIN. : Thou pleasest me ; for so much more like this
Will raise my anger up above my griefs,
(Which is a passion easier to be borne)
And I shall then be happy.
MEL. : Take then more,
To raise thine anger : 'Tis mere cowardice
Makes thee not draw ; and I will leave thee dead,
However. But if thou art so much press'd
With guilt and fear, as not to dare to fight,
I'll make thy memory loath'd, and fix a scandal
Upon thy name for ever.
AMIN. : Then I draw,
As justly as our magistrates their swords
To cut offenders off. I knew before,
'Twould grate your ears ; but it was base in you
To urge a weighty secret from your friend,
And then rage at it. I shall be at ease,
If I be kill'd ; and if you fall by me,
I shall not long out-live you.
MEL. : Stay awhile.—
The name of friend is more than family,
Or all the world besides : I was a fool !
Thou searching human nature, that didst wake
To do me wrong, thou art inquisitive,
And thrust'st me upon questions that will take
My sleep away ! 'Would I had died, ere known
This sad dishonour !—Pardon me, my friend !
If thou wilt strike, here is a faithful heart ;
Pierce it, for I will never heave my hand
To thine. Behold the power thou hast in me !
I do believe my sister is a whore,
A leprous one ! Put up thy sword, young man.

AMIN. : How shall I bear it then, she being so ?
I fear, my friend, that you will lose me shortly ;
And I shall do a foul act on myself,
Through these disgraces.
MEL. : Better half the land
Were buried quick together. No, Amintor ;
Thou shalt have ease. Oh, this adulterous king,
That drew her to it ! Where got he the spirit
To wrong me so ?
AMIN. : What is it then to me,
If it be wrong to you ?
MEL. : Why, not so much :
The credit of our house is thrown away.
But from his iron den I'll waken Death,
And hurl him on this king ! My honesty
Shall steel my sword ; and on its horrid point
I'll wear my cause, that shall amaze the eyes
Of this proud man, and be too glittering
For him to look on.
AMIN. : I have quite undone my fame.
MEL. : Dry up thy watery eyes,
And cast a manly look upon my face ;
For nothing is so wild as I, thy friend,
Till I have freed thee. Still this swelling breast !
I go thus from thee, and will never cease
My vengeance, till I find thy heart at peace.
AMIN. : It must not be so. Stay !—Mine eyes would tell
How loth I am to this ; but, love and tears,
Leave me awhile ; for I have hazarded
All that this world calls happy.—Thou hast wrought
A secret from me, under name of friend,
Which art could ne'er have found, nor torture wrung
From out my bosom : Give it me again,
For I will find it, wheresoe'er it lies,
Hid in the mortal'st part ! Invent a way
To give it back.
MEL. : Why would you have it back ?
I will to death pursue him with revenge.
AMIN. : Therefore I call it back from thee ; for I know
Thy blood so high, that thou wilt stir in this,
And shame me to posterity.
Take to thy weapon !
MEL. : Hear thy friend, that bears
More years than thou.
AMIN. : I will not hear ! but draw,
Or I——
MEL. : Amintor !
AMIN. : Draw then ; for I am full as resolute
As fame and honour can inforce me be !
I cannot linger. Draw !
MEL. : I do. But is not
My share of credit equal with thine,
If I do stir ?

AMIN. : No ; for it will be call'd
Honour in theé to spill thy sister's blood,
If she her birth abuse ; and, on the king,
A brave revenge : But on me, that have walk'd
With patience in it, it will fix the name
Of fearful cuckold. Oh, that word ! Be quick.
MEL. : Then join with me.
AMIN. : I dare not do a sin, or else I would.
Be speedy.
MEL. : Then dare not fight with me ; for that's a sin.—
His grief distracts him.—Call thy thoughts again,
And to thyself pronounce the name of friend,
And see what that will work. I will not fight.
AMIN. : You must.
MEL. : I will be kill'd first. Though my passions
Offer'd the like to you, 'tis not this earth
Shall buy my reason to it. Think awhile,
For you are (I must weep when I speak that)
Almost besides yourself.
AMIN. : Oh, my soft temper !
So many sweet words from thy sister's mouth,
I am afraid, would make me take her
To embrace, and pardon her. I am mad indeed,
And know not what I do. Yet, have a care
Of me in what thou dost.
MEL. : Why, thinks my friend
I will forget his honour ? or, to save
The bravery of our house, will lose his fame,
And fear to touch the throne of majesty ?
AMIN. : A curse will follow that ; but rather live
And suffer with me.
MEL. : I'll do what worth shall bid me, and no more.
AMIN. : Faith, I am sick, and desperately I hope ;
Yet, leaning thus, I feel a kind of ease.
MEL. : Come, take again your mirth about you.
AMIN. : I shall never do't.
MEL. : I warrant you ; look up ; we'll walk together ;
Put thine arm here ; all shall be well again.
AMIN. : Thy love (oh, wretched !) ay, thy love, Melantius !
Why, I have nothing else.
MEL. : Be merry then. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter MELANTIUS.

MEL. : This worthy young man may do violence
Upon himself ; but I have cherish'd him
To my best power, and sent him smiling from me,
To counterfeit again. Sword, hold thine edge ;
My heart will never fail me.

Enter DIPHILUS.

Diphilus ! Thou com'st as sent.
DIPH. : Yonder has been such laughing.
MEL. : Betwixt whom ?

DIPH. : Why, our sister and the king ;
I thought their spleens would break ; they laugh'd us all
Out of the room.
MEL. : They must weep, Diphilus.
DIPH. : Must they ?
MEL. : They must.
Thou art my brother ; and if I did believe
Thou hadst a base thought, I would rip it out,
Lie where it durst.
DIPH. : You should not ; I would first
Mangle myself and find it.
MEL. : That was spoke
According to our strain. Come, join thy hands to mine,
And swear a firmness to what project I
Shall lay before thee.
DIPH. : You do wrong us both :
People hereafter shall not say, there pass'd
A bond, more than our loves, to tie our lives
And deaths together.
MEL. : It is as nobly said as I would wish.
Anon I'll tell you wonders : We are wrong'd.
DIPH. : But I will tell you now, we'll right ourselves.
MEL. : Stay not : Prepare the armour in my house ;
And what friends you can draw unto our side,
Not knowing of the cause, make ready too,
Haste, Diphilus, the time requires it, haste !—

[*Exit* DIPHILUS.

I hope my cause is just ; I know my blood
Tells me it is ; and I will credit it.
To take revenge, and lose myself withal,
Were idle ; and to 'scape impossible,
Without I had the fort, which (misery !)
Remaining in the hands of my old enemy
Calianax—— But I must have it. See,

Enter CALIANAX.

Where he comes shaking by me.—Good, my lord,
Forget your spleen to me ; I never wrong'd you,
But would have peace with every man.
CAL. : 'Tis well ;
If I durst fight, your tongue would lie at quiet.
MEL. : You are touchy without all cause.
CAL. : Do, mock me.
MEL. : By mine honour I speak truth.
CAL. : Honour ? where is it ?
MEL. : See, what starts
You make into your hatred, to my love
And freedom to you. I come with resolution
To obtain a suit of you.
CAL. : A suit of me !
'Tis very like it should be granted, sir.
MEL. : Nay, go not hence :
'Tis this ; you have the keeping of the fort,
And I would wish you, by the love you ought

To bear unto me, to deliver it
Into my hands.
CAL. : I am in hope thou'rt mad,
To talk to me thus.
MEL. : But there is a reason
To move you to it : I would kill the king,
That wrong'd you and your daughter.
CAL. : Out, traitor !
MEL. : Nay,
But stay : I cannot 'scape, the deed once done,
Without I have this fort.
CAL. : And should I help thee ?
Now thy treacherous mind betrays itself.
MEL. : Come, delay me not ;
Give me a sudden answer, or already
Thy last is spoken ! refuse not offer'd love,
When it comes clad in secrets.
CAL. : If I say [*Aside.*
I will not, he will kill me ; I do see't
Writ in his looks ; and should I say I will,
He'll run and tell the king.—I do not shun
Your friendship, dear Melantius, but this cause
Is weighty ; give me but an hour to think.
MEL. : Take it.—I know this goes unto the king ;
But I am arm'd. [*Exit* MELANTIUS.
CAL. : Methinks I feel myself
But twenty now again ! this fighting fool
Wants policy : I shall revenge my girl,
And make her red again. I pray, my legs
Will last that pace that I will carry them :
I shall want breath, before I find the king. [*Exit.*

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*The Apartment of* EVADNE *in the Palace.*

Enter MELANTIUS, EVADNE, *and* LADIES.

MEL. : Save you !
EVAD. : Save you, sweet brother !
MEL. : In my blunt eye, methinks, you look, Evadne——
EVAD. : Come, you will make me blush.
MEL. : I would, Evadne ;
I shall displease my ends else.
EVAD. : You shall, if you commend me ; I am bashful.
Come, sir, how do I look ?
MEL. : I would not have your women hear me
Break into commendation of you ; 'tis not seemly.
EVAD. : Go, wait in the gallery.—Now speak. [*Exeunt* LADIES.
MEL. : I'll lock the door first.
EVAD. : Why ?
MEL. : I will not have your gilded things, that dance
In visitation with their Milan skins,
Choke up my business.
EVAD. : You are strangely disposed, sir.

MEL. : Good madam, not to make you merry.
EVAD. : No ; if you praise me it will make me sad.
MEL. : Such a sad commendation I have for you.
EVAD. : Brother, the court hath made you witty,
And learn to riddle.
MEL. : I praise the court for't : Has it learnt you nothing ?
EVAD. : Me ?
MEL. : Ay, Evadne ; thou art young and handsome,
A lady of a sweet complexion,
And such a flowing carriage, that it cannot
Chuse but inflame a kingdom.
EVAD. : Gentle brother !
MEL. : 'Tis yet in thy repentance, foolish woman,
To make me gentle.
EVAD. : How is this ?
MEL. : 'Tis base ;
And I could blush, at these years, thorough all
My honour'd scars, to come to such a parley.
EVAD. : I understand you not.
MEL. : You dare not, fool !
They, that commit thy faults, fly the remembrance.
EVAD. : My faults, sir ! I would have you know, I care not
If they were written here, here in my forehead.
MEL. : Thy body is too little for the story ;
The lusts of which would fill another woman,
Though she had twins within her.
EVAD. : This is saucy :
Look you intrude no more ! There lies your way.
MEL. : Thou art my way, and I will tread upon thee,
Till I find truth out.
EVAD. : What truth is that you look for ?
MEL. : Thy long-lost honour. 'Would the gods had set me
Rather to grapple with the plague, or stand
One of their loudest bolts ! Come, tell me quickly,
Do it without enforcement, and take heed
You swell me not above my temper.
EVAD. : How, sir.
Where got you this report ?
MEL. : Where there were people,
In every place.
EVAD. : They, and the seconds of it are base people :
Believe them not, they lied.
MEL. : Do not play with mine anger, do not, wretch ! [*Seizes her.*
I come to know that desperate fool that drew thee
From thy fair life : Be wise and lay him open.
EVAD. : Unhand me, and learn manners ! Such another
Forgetfulness forfeits your life.
MEL. : Quench me this mighty humour, and then tell me
Whose whore you are ; for you are one, I know it.
Let all mine honours perish, but I'll find him,
Though he lie lock'd up in thy blood ! Be sudden ;
There is no facing it, and be not flatter'd !
The burnt air, when the Dog reigns, is not fouler

Than thy contagious name, till thy repentance
(If the gods grant thee any) purge thy sickness.

EVAD. : Be gone ! you are my brother ; that's your safety.

MEL. : I'll be a wolf first ! 'Tis, to be thy brother,
An infamy below the sin of coward.
I am as far from being part of thee,
As thou art from thy virtue : Seek a kindred
'Mongst sensual beasts, and make a goat thy brother ?
A goat is cooler. Will you tell me yet ?

EVAD. : If you stay here and rail thus, I shall tell you,
I'll have you whipp'd ! Get you to your command,
And there preach to your sentinels, and tell them
What a brave man you are : I shall laugh at you.

MEL. : You are grown a glorious whore ! Where be your fighters ?
What mortal fool durst raise thee to this daring,
And I alive ! By my just sword, he had safer
Bestride a billow, when the angry North
Plows up the sea, or made Heaven's fire his food !
Work me no higher. Will you discover yet ?

EVAD. : The fellow's mad : Sleep, and speak sense.

MEL. : Force my swoll'n heart no further : I would save thee.
Your great maintainers are not here, they dare not :
Would they were all, and arm'd ! I would speak loud ;
Here's one should thunder to 'em ! will you tell me ?
Thou hast no hope to 'scape : He that dares most,
And damns away his soul to do thee service,
Will sooner snatch meat from a hungry lion,
Than come to rescue thee ; thou hast death about thee.
Who has undone thine honour, poison'd thy virtue,
And, of a lovely rose, left thee a canker ?

EVAD. : Let me consider.

MEL. : Do, whose child thou wert,
Whose honour thou hast murder'd, whose grave open'd,
And so pull'd on the gods, that in their justice
They must restore him flesh again, and life,
And raise his dry bones to revenge this scandal.

EVAD. : The gods are not of my mind ; they had better
Let 'em lie sweet still in the earth ; they'll stink here.

MEL. : Do you raise mirth out of my easiness ? [*Draws.*
Forsake me, then, all weaknesses of nature,
That make men women ! Speak, you whore, speak truth !
Or, by the dear soul of thy sleeping father,
This sword shall be thy lover ! Tell, or I'll kill thee ;
And, when thou hast told all, thou wilt deserve it.

EVAD. : You will not murder me ?

MEL. : No ; 'tis a justice, and a noble one,
To put the light out of such base offenders.

EVAD. : Help !

MEL. : By thy foul self, no human help shall help thee,
If thou criest ! When I have kill'd thee as I
Have vow'd to do if thou confess not, naked,
As thou hast left thine honour, will I leave thee ;
That on thy branded flesh the world may read
Thy black shame, and my justice. Wilt thou bend yet ?

EVAD : Yes.
MEL. : Up, and begin your story.
EVAD. : Oh, I am miserable !
MEL. : 'Tis true, thou art. Speak truth still.
EVAD. : I have offended : Noble sir, forgive me.
MEL. : With what secure slave ?
EVAD. : Do not ask me, sir :
Mine own remembrance is a misery
Too mighty for me.
MEL. : Do not fall back again :
My sword's unsheathed yet.
EVAD. : What shall I do ?
MEL. : Be true, and make your fault less.
EVAD. : I dare not tell.
MEL. : Tell, or I'll be this day a-killing thee.
EVAD. : Will you forgive me then ?
MEL. : Stay ; I must ask mine honour first.—
I have too much foolish nature in me : Speak.
EVAD. : Is there none else here ?
MEL. : None but a fearful conscience ; that's too many.
Who is't ?
EVAD. : Oh, hear me gently. It was the king.
MEL. : No more. My worthy father's and my services
Are liberally rewarded.—King, I thank thee !
For all my dangers and my wounds, thou hast paid me
In my own metal : These are soldiers' thanks !—
How long have you lived thus, Evadne ?
EVAD. : Too long.
MEL. : Too late you find it. Can you be sorry ?
EVAD. : Would I were half as blameless.
MEL. : Evadne, thou wilt to thy trade again !
EVAD. : First to my grave.
MEL. : 'Would gods thou hast been so blest.
Dost thou not hate this king now ? pr'ythee hate him.
Couldst thou not curse him ? I command thee, curse him.
Curse till the gods hear, and deliver him
To thy just wishes ! Yet, I fear, Evadne,
You had rather play your game out.
EVAD. : No ; I feel
Too many sad confusions here, to let in
Any loose flame hereafter.
MEL. : Dost thou not feel, 'mongst all those, one brave anger
That breaks out nobly, and directs thine arm
To kill this base king ?
EVAD. : All the gods forbid it !
MEL. : No ; all the gods require it :
They are dishonour'd in him.
EVAD. : 'Tis too fearful.
MEL. : You are valiant in his bed, and bold enough
To be a stale whore, and have your madam's name
Discourse for grooms and pages ; and, hereafter,
When his cool majesty hath laid you by,
To be at pension with some needy sir,

For meat and coarser clothes ; Thus far you know
No fear. Come, you shall kill him.

EVAD. : Good sir !

MEL. : An 'twere to kiss him dead, thou shouldst smother him.
Be wise, and kill him. Canst thou live, and know
What noble minds shall make thee, see thyself
Found out with every finger, made the shame
Of all successions, and in this great ruin
Thy brother and thy noble husband broken ?
Thou shalt not live thus. Kneel, and swear to help me,
When I shall call thee to it ; or, by all
Holy in Heaven and earth, thou shalt not live
To breathe a full hour longer ; not a thought !
Come, 'tis a righteous oath. Give me thy hands,
And, both to Heaven held up, swear, by that wealth
This lustful thief stole from thee, when I say it,
To let his foul soul out.

EVAD. : Here I swear it ;
And, all you spirits of abused ladies,
Help me in this performance !

MEL. : Enough. This must be known to none
But you and I, Evadne ; not to your lord,
Though he be wise and noble, and a fellow
Dares step as far into a worthy action
As the most daring : ay, as far as justice.
Ask me not why. Farewell. [*Exit* MELANTIUS.

EVAD. : 'Would I could say so to my black disgrace !
Oh, where have I been all this time ? how 'friended,
That I should lose myself thus desperately,
And none for pity show me how I wandered ?
There is not in the compass of the light
A more unhappy creature : Sure, I am monstrous !
For I have done those follies, those mad mischiefs,
Would dare a woman. Oh, my loaden soul,
Be not so cruel to me ; choke not up
The way to my repentance ! Oh, my lord !

Enter AMINTOR.

AMIN. : How now ?

EVAD. : My much-abused lord ! [*Kneels.*

AMIN. : This cannot be !

EVAD. : I do not kneel to live ; I dare not hope it ;
The wrongs I did are greater. Look upon me,
Though I appear with all my faults.

AMIN. : Stand up.
This is a new way to beget more sorrow :
Heaven knows I have too many ! Do not mock me :
Though I am tame, and bred up with my wrongs,
Which are my foster-brothers, I may leap,
Like a hand-wolf, into my natural wildness,
And do an outrage. Pr'ythee, do not mock me.

EVAD. : My whole life is so leprous, it infects
All my repentance. I would buy your pardon,
Though at the highest set ; even with my life.

That slight contrition, that's no sacrifice
For what I have committed.
AMIN. : Sure I dazzle :
There cannot be a faith in that foul woman,
That knows no god more mighty than her mischiefs.
Thou dost still worse, still number on thy faults,
To press my poor heart thus. Can I believe
There's any seed of virtue in that woman
Left to shoot up, that dares go on in sin,
Known, and so known as thine is. Oh, Evadne !
'Would there were any safety in thy sex,
That I might put a thousand sorrows off,
And credit thy repentance ! But I must not :
Thou hast brought me to that dull calamity,
To that strange misbelief of all the world,
And all things that are in it, that I fear
I shall fall like a tree, and find my grave,
Only remembering that I grieve.
EVAD. : My lord,
Give me your griefs : You are an innocent,
A soul as white as heaven ; let not my sins
Perish your noble youth. I do not fall here
To shadow, by dissembling with my tears,
(As, all say, women can), or to make less,
What my hot will hath done, which Heaven and you
Know to be tougher than the hand of time
Can cut from man's remembrance. No, I do not :
I do appear the same, the same Evadne,
Drest in the shames I lived in : the same monster !
But these are names of honour, to what I am :
I do present myself the foulest creature,
Most poisonous, dangerous, and despised of men,
Lerna e'er bred, or Nilus ! I am hell,
Till you, my dear lord, shoot your light into me,
The beams of your forgiveness. I am soul-sick,
And wither with the fear of one condemn'd,
Till I have got your pardon.
AMIN. : Rise, Evadne.
Those heavenly powers that put this good into thee,
Grant a continuance of it ! I forgive thee :
Make thyself worthy of it ; and take heed,
Take heed, Evadne, this be serious.
Mock not the powers above, that can and dare
Give thee a great example of their justice
To all ensuing eyes, if thou playest
With thy repentance, the best sacrifice.
EVAD. : I have done nothing good to win belief,
My life hath been so faithless. All the creatures,
Made for Heaven's honours, have their ends, and good ones,
All but the cozening crocodiles, false women !
They reign here like those plagues, those killing sores,
Men pray against ; and when they die, like tales
Ill told and unbelieved, they pass away
And go to dust forgotten ! But, my lord,

Those short days I shall number to my rest
(As many must not see me) shall, though too late,
Though in my evening, yet preceive a will ;
Since I can do no good, because a woman,
Reach constantly at something that is near it :
I will redeem one minute of my age,
Or, like another Niobe, I'll weep
Till I am water.

AMIN. : I am now dissolved :
My frozen soul melts. May each sin thou hast
Find a new mercy ! Rise ; I am at peace.
Hadst thou been thus, thus excellently good,
Before that devil king tempted thy frailty,
Sure thou hadst made a star ! Give me thy hand.
From this time I will know thee ; and, as far
As honour gives me leave, be thy Amintor.
When we meet next, I will salute thee fairly,
And pray the gods to give thee happy days.
My charity shall go along with thee,
Though my embraces must be far from thee.
I should have kill'd thee, but this sweet repentance
Locks up my vengeance ; for which thus I kiss thee—
The last kiss we must take ! And 'would to Heaven
The holy priest, that gave our hands together,
Had given us equal virtues ! Go, Evadne ;
The Gods thus part our bodies. Have a care
My honour falls no farther : I am well then.

EVAD. : All the dear joys here, and, above, hereafter,
Crown thy fair soul ! Thus I take leave, my lord ;
And never shall you see the foul Evadne,
Till she have tried all honour'd means, that may
Set her in rest, and wash her stains away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Presence Chamber.*

Banquet—Enter KING *and* CALIANAX—*Hautboys play within.*

KING : I cannot tell how I should credit this
From you, that are his enemy.

CAL. : I am sure
He said it to me ; and I'll justify it
What way he dares oppose—but with my sword.

KING : But did he break, without all circumstance,
To you, his foe, that he would have the fort,
To kill me, and then 'scape ?

CAL. : If he deny it,
I'll make him blush.

KING : It sounds incredibly.

CAL. : Ay, so does everything I say of late.

KING : Not so, Calianax.

CAL. : Yes, I should sit
Mute, whilst a rogue with strong arms cuts your throat.

KING : Well, I will try him ; and, if this be true,
I'll pawn my life I'll find it. If't be false,
And that you clothe your hate in such a lie,

You shall hereafter dote in your own house,
Not in the court.
CAL. : Why, if it be a lie,
Mine ears are false ; for, I'll be sworn, I heard it.
Old men are good for nothing : You were best
Put me to death for hearing, and free him
For meaning it. You would have trusted me
Once, but the time is alter'd.
KING : And will still,
Where I may do with justice to the world :
You have no witness ?
CAL. : Yes, myself.
KING : No more,
I mean, there were that heard it.
CAL. : How ! no more ?
Would you have more ? why, am not I enough
To hang a thousand rogues ?
KING : But, so, you may
Hang honest men too, if you please.
CAL. : I may !
'Tis like I will do so : There are a hundred
Will swear it for a need too, if I say it——
KING : Such witnesses we need not.
CAL. : And 'tis hard
If my word cannot hang a boisterous knave.
KING : Enough.—Where's Strato ?

Enter STRATO.

STRA. : Sir !
KING : Why, where's all the company ? Call Amintor in ;
Evadne. Where's my brother, and Melantius ?
Bid him come too ; and Diphilus. Call all
That are without there. [*Exit* STRATO.
If he should desire
The combat of you, 'tis not in the power
Of all our laws to hinder it, unless
We mean to quit 'em.
CAL. : Why, if you do think
'Tis fit an old man, and a counsellor,
Do fight for what he says, then you may grant it.

Enter AMINTOR, EVADNE, MELANTIUS, DIPHILUS, LYSIPPUS, CLEON, STRATO, DIAGORAS.

KING : Come, sirs !—Amintor, thou art yet a bridegroom,
And I will use thee so : Thou shalt sit down.—
Evadne, sit ; and you, Amintor, too :
This banquet is for you, sir.—Who has brought
A merry tale about him, to raise laughter
Amongst our wine ? Why, Strato, where art thou ?
Thou wilt chop out with them unseasonably,
When I desire them not.
STRA. : 'Tis my ill luck, sir, so to spend them then.
KING : Reach me a bowl of wine.—Melantius, thou
Art sad.

MEL. : I should be, sir, the merriest here,
But I have ne'er a story of my own
Worth telling at this time.
KING : Give me the wine.
Melantius, I am now considering
How easy 'twere, for any man we trust,
To poison one of us in such a bowl.
MEL. : I think it were not hard, sir, for a knave.
CAL. : Such as you are. [*Aside.*
KING : I'faith, 'twere easy : It becomes us well
To get plain-dealing men about ourselves ;
Such as you all are here.—Amintor, to thee ;
And to thy fair Evadne.
MEL. : Have you thought
Of this, Calianax ? [*Apart to him.*
CAL. : Yes, marry, have I.
MEL. : And what's your resolution ?
CAL. : You shall have it,——
Soundly, I warrant you.
KING : Reach to Amintor, Strato.
AMIN. : Here, my love,
This wine will do thee wrong, for it will set
Blushes upon thy cheeks ; and, till thou dost
A fault, 'twere pity.
KING : Yet, I wonder much
At the strange desperation of these men,
That dare attempt such acts here in our state :
He could not 'scape, that did it.
MEL. : Were he known,
Impossible.
KING : It would be known, Melantius.
MEL. : It ought to be : If he got then away,
He must wear all our lives upon his sword.
He need not fly the island ; he must leave
No one alive.
KING : No ; I should think no man
Could kill me, and 'scape clear, but that old man.
CAL. : But I ! heaven bless me ! I ! should I, my liege ?
KING : I do not think thou would'st ; but yet thou might'st ;
For thou hast in thy hands the means to 'scape,
By keeping of the fort.—He has, Melantius,
And he has kept it well.
MEL. : From cobwebs, sir,
'Tis clean swept : I can find no other art
In keeping of it now : 'Twas ne'er besieged
Since he commanded it.
CAL. : I shall be sure
Of your good word : But I have kept it safe
From such as you.
MEL. : Keep your ill temper in :
I speak no malice. Had my brother kept it,
I should have said as much.

KING : You are not merry.
Brother, drink wine. Sit you all still :—Calianax,
[*Apart to him.*
I cannot trust thus : I have thrown out words,
That would have fetch'd warm blood upon the cheeks
Of guilty men, and he is never moved :
He knows no such thing.
CAL. : Impudence may 'scape,
When feeble virtue is accused.
KING : He must,
If he were guilty, feel an alteration
At this our whisper, whilst we point at him :
You see he does not.
CAL. : Let him hang himself :
What care I what he does ? This he did say.
KING : Melantius, you can easily conceive
What I have meant ; for men that are in fault
Can subtly apprehend, when others aim
At what they do amiss : But I forgive
Freely, before this man. Heaven do so too !
I will not touch thee, so much as with shame
Of telling it. Let it be so no more.
CAL. : Why, this is very fine.
MEL. : I cannot tell
What 'tis you mean ; but I am apt enough
Rudely to thrust into an ignorant fault.
But let me know it : Happily, 'tis nought
But misconstruction ; and, where I am clear,
I will not take forgiveness of the gods,
Much less of you.
KING : Nay, if you stand so stiff,
I shall call back my mercy.
MEL. : I want smoothness
To thank a man for pardoning of a crime
I never knew.
KING : Not to instruct your knowledge, but to show you
My ears are everywhere, you meant to kill me,
And get the fort to 'scape.
MEL. : Pardon me, sir ;
My bluntness will be pardoned : You preserve
A race of idle people here about you,
Facers and talkers, to defame the worth
Of those that do things worthy. The man that utter'd this
Had perish'd without food, be't who it will,
But for this arm, that fenced him from the foe,
And if I thought you gave a faith to this,
The plainness of my nature would speak more.
Give me a pardon (for you ought to do't)
To kill him that spake this.
CAL. : Ay, that will be
The end of all : Then I am fairly paid
For all my care and service.
MEL. : That old man,
Who calls me enemy, and of whom I

(Though I will never match my hate so low)
Have no good thought, would yet, I think, excuse me,
And swear he thought me wrong'd in this.

CAL. : Who—I ?
Thou shameless fellow ! Didst thou not speak to me
Of it thyself ?

MEL. : Oh, then it came from him ?

CAL. : From me ! who should it come from, but from me ?

MEL. : Nay, I believe your malice is enough :
But I have lost my anger.—Sir, I hope
You are well satisfied.

KING : Lysippus, cheer
Amintor and his lady ; there's no sound
Comes from you ; I will come and do't myself.

AMIN. : You have done already, sir, for me,
I thank you. [*Apart.*

KING : Melantius, I do credit this from him,
How slight soe'er you make't.

MEL. : 'Tis strange you should.

CAL. : 'Tis strange he should believe an old man's word
That never lied in's life.

MEL. : I talk not to thee !—
Shall the wild words of this distemper'd man,
Frantic with age and sorrow, make a breach
Betwixt your majesty and me ? 'Twas wrong
To hearken to him ; but to credit him,
As much, at least, as I have power to bear.
But pardon me—whilst I speak only truth,
I may commend myself—I have bestow'd
My careless blood with you, and should be loth
To think an action that would make me lose
That, and my thanks too. When I was a boy,
I thrust myself into my country's cause,
And did a deed that pluck'd five years from time,
And styled me man then. And for you, my king,
Your subjects all have fed by virtue of
My arm. This sword of mine hath plough'd the ground,
And reapt the fruit in peace ;
And you yourself have lived at home in ease.
So terrible I grew, that, without swords,
My name hath fetch'd you conquest : And my heart
And limbs are still the same : my will as great
To do you service. Let me not be paid
With such a strange distrust.

KING : Melantius,
I held it great injustice to believe
Thine enemy, and did not ; if I did,
I do not ; let that satisfy.—What, struck
With sadness all ? More wine !

CAL. : A few fine words
Have overthrown my truth. Ah, thou'rt a villain !

MEL. : Why, thou wert better let me have the fort, [*Apart to him.*
Dotard ! I will disgrace thee thus for ever :

There shall no credit lie upon thy words.
Think better, and deliver it.

CAL. : My liege,
He's at me now again to do it.—Speak ;
Deny it, if thou canst.—Examine him
While he is hot ; for if he cool again,
He will forswear it.

KING : This is lunacy,
I hope, Melantius.

MEL. : He hath lost himself
Much, since his daughter miss'd the happiness
My sister gain'd ; and, though he call me foe,
I pity him.

CAL. : Pity ? a pox upon you !

MEL. : Mark his disordered words ! And, at the masque,
Diagoras knows, he raged, and rail'd at me,
And call'd a lady whore, so innocent
She understood him not. But it becomes
Both you and me too to forgive distraction :
Pardon him, as I do.

CAL. : I'll not speak for thee,
For all thy cunning.—If you will be safe,
Chop off his head ; for there was never known
So impudent a rascal.

KING : Some, that love him,
Get him to bed. Why, pity should not let
Age make itself contemptible ; we must be
All old ; have him away.

MEL. : Calianax, [*Apart to him.*
The king believes you ; come, you shall go home,
And rest ; you have done well. You'll give it up
When I have used you thus a month, I hope.

CAL. : Now, now, 'tis plain, sir ; he does move me still.
He says, he knows I'll give him up the fort,
When he has used me thus a month. I am mad,
Am I not, still ?

ALL : Ha, ha, ha !

CAL. : I shall be mad indeed, if you do thus !
Why should you trust a sturdy fellow there
(That has no virtue in him ; all's in his sword)
Before me ? Do but take his weapons from him,
And he's an ass ; and I'm a very fool,
Both with him, and without him, as you use me.

ALL : Ha, ha, ha !

KING : 'Tis well, Calianax. But if you use
This once again, I shall entreat some other
To see your offices be well discharged.
Be merry, gentlemen ; it grows somewhat late.—
Amintor, thou wouldst be a-bed again.

AMIN. : Yes, sir.

KING : And you, Evadne.—Let me take
Thee in my arms, Melantius, and believe
Thou art, as thou deserv'st to be, my friend

Still, and for ever.—Good Calianax,
Sleep soundly ; it will bring thee to thyself.

[*Exeunt all but* MELANTIUS *and* CALIANAX.

CAL. : Sleep soundly ! I sleep soundly now, I hope ;
I could not be thus else.—How darest thou stay
Alone with me, knowing how thou hast used me ?
MEL. : You cannot blast me with your tongue, and that's
The strongest part you have about you.
CAL. : I
Do look for some great punishment for this ;
For I begin to forget all my hate,
And take't unkindly that mine enemy
Should use me so extraordinarily scurvily.
MEL. : I shall melt too, if you begin to take
Unkindnesses : I never meant you hurt.
CAL. : Thou'lt anger me again. Thou wretched rogue,
Meant me no hurt ! Disgrace me with the king ;
Lose all my offices ! This is no hurt,
Is it ? I pr'ythee, what dost thou call hurt ?
MEL. : To poison men, because they love me not ;
To call the credit of men's wives in question ;
To murder children betwixt me and land ;
This is all hurt.
CAL. : All this thou think'st is sport ;
For mine is worse : But use thy will with me ;
For, betwixt grief and anger, I could cry.
MEL. : Be wise then, and be safe ; thou may'st revenge.
CAL. : Ay, o' the king ? I would revenge o' thee.
MEL. : That you must plot yourself.
CAL. : I'm a fine plotter.
MEL. : The short is, I will hold thee with the king
In this perplexity, till peevishness
And thy disgrace have laid thee in thy grave.
But if thou wilt deliver up the fort,
I'll take thy trembling body in my arms,
And bear thee over dangers : Thou shalt hold
Thy wonted state.
CAL. : If I should tell the king,
Canst thou deny't again ?
MEL. : Try, and believe.
CAL. : Nay, then, thou canst bring anything about.
Thou shalt have the fort.
MEL. : Why, well ;
Here let our hate be buried ; and this hand
Shall right us both. Give me thy aged breast
To compass.
CAL. : Nay, I do not love thee yet ;
I cannot well endure to look on thee :
And, if I thought it were a courtesy,
Thou should'st not have it. But I am disgraced ;
My offices are to be ta'en away ;
And, if I did but hold this fort a day,
I do believe, the king would take it from me,
And give it thee, things are so strangely carried.

Ne'er thank me for't ; but yet the king shall know
There was some such thing in't I told him of ;
And that I was an honest man.
MEL. : He'll buy
That knowledge very dearly.—Diphilus,

Enter DIPHILUS.

What news with thee ?
DIPH. : This were a night indeed
To do it in : The king hath sent for her.
MEL. : She shall perform it then.—Go, Diphilus,
And take from this good man, my worthy friend,
The fort ; he'll give it thee.
DIPH. : Have you got that ?
CAL. : Art thou of the same breed ? Canst thou deny
This to the king too ?
DIPH. : With a confidence
As great as his.
CAL. : 'Faith, like enough.
MEL. : Away, and use him kindly.
CAL. : Touch not me ;
I hate the whole strain. If thou follow me,
A great way off, I'll give thee up the fort ;
And hang yourselves.
MEL. : Be gone.
DIPH. : He's finely wrought. [*Exeunt* CALIANAX *and* DIPHILUS.
MEL. : This is a night, 'spite of astronomers,
To do the deed in. I will wash the stain,
That rests upon our house, off with his blood.

Enter AMINTOR.

AMIN. : Melantius, now assist me : If thou be'st
That which thou say'st, assist me. I have lost
All my distempers, and have found a rage
So pleasing ! Help me.
MEL. : Who can see him thus,
And not swear vengeance ?—What's the matter, friend ?
AMIN. : Out with thy sword ; and, hand in hand with me,
Rush to the chamber of this hated king :
And sink him, with the weight of all his sins,
To hell for ever.
MEL. : 'Twere a rash attempt,
Not to be done with safety. Let your reason
Plot your revenge, and not your passion.
AMIN. : If thou refusest me in these extremes,
Thou art no friend : He sent for her to me ;
By Heaven, to me, myself ! And, I must tell you,
I love her, as a stranger ; there is worth
In that vile woman, worthy things, Melantius ;
And she repents. I'll do't myself alone,
Though I be slain. Farewell.
MEL. : He'll overthrow
My whole design with madness.—Amintor,
Think what thou dost : I dare as much as Valour ;

But 'tis the king, the king, the king, Amintor,
With whom thou fightest !—I know he's honest,
And this will work with him. [*Aside.*

AMIN. : I cannot tell
What thou hast said ; but thou hast charm'd my sword
Out of my hand, and left me shaking here,
Defenceless.

MEL. : I will take it up for thee.

AMIN. : What a wild beast is uncollected man !
The thing, that we call honour, bears us all
Headlong to sin, and yet itself is nothing.

MEL. : Alas, how variable are thy thoughts !

AMIN. : Just like my fortunes : I was run to that
I purposed to have chid thee for. Some plot,
I did distrust, thou hadst against the king,
By that old fellow's carriage. But take heed ;
There's not the least limb growing to a king,
But carries thunder in it.

MEL. : I have none
Against him.

AMIN. : Why, come then ; and still remember,
We may not think revenge.

MEL. : I will remember. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Palace.*

Enter EVADNE *and a* GENTLEMAN.

EVAD. : Sir, is the king a-bed ?

GENT. : Madam, an hour ago.

EVAD. : Give me the key then, and let none be near ;
'Tis the king's pleasure.

GENT. : I understand you, madam ; 'would 'twere mine.
I must not wish good rest unto your ladyship.

EVAD. : You talk, you talk.

GENT. : 'Tis all I dare do, madam ; but the king
Will wake, and then——

EVAD. : Saving your imagination, pray, good night, sir.

GENT. : A good night be it then, and a long one, madam.
I am gone. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Bedchamber. The* KING *discovered in Bed, sleeping.*

Enter EVADNE.

EVAD. : The night grows horrible ; and all about me
Like my black purpose. Oh, the conscience
Of a lost virgin ! whither wilt thou pull me ?
To what things, dismal as the depth of hell,
Wilt thou provoke me ? Let no woman dare
From this hour be disloyal, if her heart be flesh,
If she have blood, and can fear : 'Tis a daring
Above that desperate fool's that left his peace,
And went to sea to fight. 'Tis so many sins,
An age cannot repent 'em ; and so great,
The gods want mercy for ! Yet I must through 'em.

I have begun a slaughter on my honour,
And I must end it there.—He sleeps. Good Heavens!
Why give you peace to this untemperate beast,
That hath so long transgressed you; I must kill him,
And I will do it bravely: The mere joy
Tells me, I merit in it. Yet I must not
Thus tamely do it, as he sleeps; that were
To rock him to another world: My vengeance
Shall take him waking, and then lay before him
The number of his wrongs and punishments.
I'll shake his sins like furies, till I waken
His evil angel, his sick conscience;
And then I'll strike him dead. King, by your leave:
[*Ties his arms to the bed.*
I dare not trust your strength. Your grace and I
Must grapple upon even terms no more.
So. If he rail me not from my resolution,
I shall be strong enough.—My lord the king!!
My lord!—He sleeps, as if he meant to wake
No more.—My lord!—Is he not dead already?
Sir! My lord!

KING: Who's that?

EVAD.: Oh, you sleep soundly, sir!

KING: My dear Evadne,
I have been dreaming of thee. Come to bed.

EVAD.: I am come at length, sir; but how welcome?

KING: What pretty new device is this, Evadne?
What, do you tie me to you? By my love
This is a quaint one. Come, my dear, and kiss me.
I'll be thy Mars; to bed, my queen of love:
Let us be caught together, that the gods
May see, and envy our embraces.

EVAD.: Stay, sir, stay;
You are too hot, and I have brought you physic
To temper your high veins.

KING: Pr'ythee, to bed then; let me take it warm;
There thou shalt know the state of my body better.

EVAD.: I know you have a surfeited foul body;
And you must bleed.

KING: Bleed!

EVAD.: Ay, you shall bleed! Lie still; and, if the devil,
Your lust, will give you leave, repent. This steel
Comes to redeem the honour that you stole,
King, my fair name; which nothing but thy death
Can answer to the world.

KING: How's this, Evadne?

EVAD.: I am not she; nor bear I in this breast
So much cold spirit to be call'd a woman.
I am a tiger; I am anything
That knows not pity. Stir not! If thou dost,
I'll take thee unprepared; thy fears upon thee,
That make thy sins look double; and so send thee
(By my revenge, I will) to look those torments
Prepared for such black souls.

KING : Thou dost not mean this ; 'tis impossible :
Thou art too sweet and gentle.
EVAD. : No, I am not.
I am as foul as thou art, and can number
As many such hells here. I was once fair,
Once I was lovely ; not a blowing rose
More chastely sweet, till thou, thou, thou foul canker,
(Stir not) didst poison me. I was a world of virtue,
Till your curst court and you (Hell bless you for't !)
With your temptations on temptations,
Made me give up mine honour ; for which, king,
I'm come to kill thee.
KING : No !
EVAD. : I am.
KING : Thou art not !
I pr'ythee speak not these things : Thou art gentle,
And wert not meant thus rugged.
EVAD. : Peace, and hear me.
Stir nothing but your tongue, and that for mercy
To those above us ; by whose lights I vow,
Those blessed fires that shot to see our sin,
If thy hot soul had substance with thy blood,
I would kill that too ; which, being past my steel,
My tongue shall reach. Thou art a shameless villain !
A thing out of the overcharge of nature ;
Sent, like a thick cloud, to disperse a plague
Upon weak catching women ! such a tyrant,
That for his lust would sell away his subjects !
Ay, all his Heaven hereafter !
KING : Hear, Evadne,
Thou soul of sweetness, hear ! I am thy king.
EVAD. : Thou art my shame ! Lie still, there's none about you,
Within your cries : All promises of safety
Are but deluding dreams. Thus, thus, thou foul man,
Thus I begin my vengeance ! [*Stabs him.*
KING : Hold, Evadne !
I do command thee, hold.
EVAD. : I do not mean, sir.
To part so fairly with you ; we must change
More of these love-tricks yet.
KING : What bloody villain
Provoked thee to this murder ?
EVAD. : Thou, thou monster.
KING : Oh !
EVAD. : Thou kept'st me brave at court, and whor'd'st me, king ;
Then married me to a young noble gentleman,
And whor'd'st me still.
KING : Evadne, pity me.
EVAD. : Hell take me then ! This for my lord Amintor !
This for my noble brother ! and this stroke
For the most wrong'd of women ! [*Kills him.*
KING : Oh ! I die.
EVAD. : Die all our faults together ! I forgive thee. [*Exit.*

Enter two GENTLEMEN *of the Bedchamber.*

1 GENT. : Come, now she's gone, let's enter ; the king expects it,
and will be angry.
2 GENT. : 'Tis a fine wench ; we'll have a snap at her one of these
nights, as she goes from him.
1 GENT. : Content. How quickly he had done with her ! I see,
kings can do no more that way than other mortal people.
2 GENT. : How fast he is ! I cannot hear him breathe.
1 GENT. : Either the tapers give a feeble light,
Or he looks very pale.
2 GENT. : And so he does :
Pray Heaven he be well ; let's look.—Alas !
He's stiff, wounded and dead : Treason, treason !
1 GENT. : Run forth and call.
2 GENT. : Treason, treason ! [*Exit.*
1 GENT. : This will be laid on us :
Who can believe a woman could do this ?

Enter CLEON *and* LYSIPPUS.

CLEON : How now ! Where's the traitor ?
1 GENT. : Fled, fled, away ; but there her woful act lies still.
CLEON : Her act ! a woman !
LYS. : Where's the body ?
1 GENT. : There.
LYS. : Farewell, thou worthy man ! There were two bonds
That tied our loves, a brother and a king ;
The least of which might fetch a flood of tears :
But such the misery of greatness is,
They have no time to mourn ; then pardon me !—

Enter STRATO.

Sirs, which way went she ?
STRA. : Never follow her ;
For she, alas ! was but the instrument.
News is now brought in, that Melantius
Has got the fort, and stands upon the wall ;
And with a loud voice calls those few, that pass
At this dead time of night, delivering
The innocence of this act.
LYS. : Gentlemen,
I am your king.
STRA. : We do acknowledge it.
LYS. : I would I were not ! Follow, all ; for this
Must have a sudden stop. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Before the Citadel.*

Enter MELANTIUS, DIPHILUS, *and* CALIANAX, *on the Walls.*
MEL. : If the dull people can believe I am arm'd,
(Be constant, Diphilus !) now we have time,
Either to bring our banish'd honours home,
Or create new ones in our ends.
DIPH. : I fear not ;
My spirit lies not that way.—Courage, Calianax.

CAL. : 'Would I had any ! you should quickly know it.
MEL. : Speak to the people : Thou art eloquent.
CAL. : 'Tis a fine eloquence to come to the gallows !
You were born to be my end. The devil take you !
Now must I hang for company. 'Tis strange,
I should be old, and neither wise nor valiant.

Enter below, LYSIPPUS, DIAGORAS, CLEON, STRATO, *and* GUARD.

LYS. : See where he stands, as boldly confident
As if he had his full command about him.
STRA. : He looks as if he had the better cause, sir ;
Under your gracious pardon, let me speak it !
Though he be mighty-spirited, and forward
To all great things ; to all things of that danger
Worse men shake at the telling of ; yet, certainly,
I do believe him noble ; and this action
Rather pull'd on, than sought : his mind was ever
As worthy as his hand.
LYS. : 'Tis my fear, too.
Heaven forgive all ! Summon him, lord Cleon.
CLEON : Ho, from the walls there !
MEL. : Worthy Cleon, welcome.
We could have wish'd you here, lord. You are honest.
CAL. : Well, thou art as flattering a knave, though
I dare not tell thee so—— [*Aside.*
LYS. : Melantius !
MEL. : Sir ?
LYS. : I am sorry that we meet thus ; our old love
Never required such distance. Pray Heaven,
You have not left yourself, and sought this safety
More out of fear than honour ! You have lost
A noble master ; which your faith, Melantius,
Some think, might have preserved : Yet you know best.
CAL. : When time was, I was mad ; some, that dares fight,
I hope will pay this rascal.
MEL. : Royal young man, whose tears look lovely on thee ;
Had they been shed for a deserving one,
They had been lasting monuments ! Thy brother,
While he was good, I call'd him king ; and served him
With that strong faith, that most unwearied valour,
Pull'd people from the farthest sun to seek him,
And beg his friendship. I was then his soldier.
But since his hot pride drew him to disgrace me,
And brand my noble actions with his lust
(That never-cured dishonour of my sister,
Base stain of whore ! and, which is worse,
The joy to make it still so) like myself,
Thus I have flung him off with my allegiance ;
And stand here mine own justice, to revenge
What I have suffered in him ; and this old man,
Wronged almost to lunacy.
CAL. : Who—I ?
You would draw me in. I have had no wrong,
I do disclaim ye all.

MEL. : The short is this :
'Tis no ambition to lift up myself
Urgeth me thus ; I do desire again
To be a subject, so I may be free.
If not, I know my strength, and will unbuild
This goodly town. Be speedy and be wise,
In a reply.
STRA. : Be sudden, sir, to tie.
All up again : What's done is past recall,
And past you to revenge : and there are thousands,
That wait for such a troubled hour as this.
Throw him the blank.
LYS. : Melantius, write in that
Thy choice : My seal is at it. [*Throws him a paper.*
MEL. : It was our honours drew us to this act,
Not gain ; and we will only work our pardons.
CAL. : Put my name in too.
DIPH. : You disclaim'd us all
But now, Calianax.
CAL. : That is all one :
I'll not be hang'd hereafter by a trick :
I'll have it in.
MEL. : You shall, you shall.—
Come to the back gate, and we'll call you king,
And give you up the fort.
LYS. : Away, away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Antechamber to* EVADNE'S *Apartments in the Palace.*

Enter ASPATIA, *in man's apparel.*

ASP. : This is my fatal hour. Heaven may forgive
My rash attempt, that causelessly hath laid
Griefs on me that will never let me rest ;
And put a woman's heart into my breast.
It is more honour for you, that I die ;
For she, that can endure the misery
That I have on me, and be patient too,
May live and laugh at all that you can do.

Enter SERVANT.

God save you, sir !
SER. : And you, sir. What's your business ?
ASP. : With you, sir, now ; to do me the fair office
To help me to your lord.
SER. : What, would you serve him ?
ASP. : I'll do him any service ; but to haste,
For my affairs are earnest, I desire
To speak with him.
SER. : Sir, because you're in such haste, I would be loth
Delay you any longer : You cannot.
ASP. : It shall become you, though, to tell your lord.
SER. : Sir, he will speak with nobody ; but, in particular,
I have in charge, about no weighty matters.

ASP. : This is most strange. Art thou gold-proof?
There's for thee ; help me to him.
SER. : Pray be not angry, sir. I'll do my best. [*Exit.*
ASP. : How stubbornly this fellow answered me !
There is a vile dishonest trick in man,
More than in woman : All the men I meet
Appear thus to me, are all harsh and rude ;
And have a subtilty in everything,
Which love could never know. But we fond women
Harbour the easiest and the smoothest thoughts,
And think, all shall go so ! It is unjust,
That men and women should be match'd together.

Enter AMINTOR *and his* MAN.

AMIN. : Where is he ?
SER. : There, my lord.
AMIN. : What would you, sir ?
ASP. : Please it your lordship to command your man
Out of the room, I shall deliver things
Worthy your hearing.
AMIN. : Leave us. [*Exit* SERVANT.
ASP. : Oh, that that shape
Should bury falsehood in it ! [*Aside.*
AMIN. : Now your will, sir.
ASP. : When you know me, my lord, you needs must guess
My business ; and I am not hard to know ;
For till the chance of war mark'd this smooth face
With these few blemishes, people would call me
My sister's picture, and her mine. In short,
I am the brother to the wrong'd Aspatia.
AMIN. : The wrong'd Aspatia ! 'Would thou wert so too
Unto the wrong'd Amintor ! Let me kiss
That hand of thine, in honour that I bear
Unto the wrong'd Aspatia. Here I stand,
That did it. 'Would he could not ! Gentle youth,
Leave me ; for there is something in thy looks,
That calls my sins, in a most hideous form,
Into my mind ; and I have grief enough
Without thy help.
ASP. : I would I could with credit.
Since I was twelve years old, I had not seen
My sister till this hour ; I now arrived :
She sent for me to see her marriage ;
A woful one ! But they, that are above,
Have ends in everything. She used few words,
But yet enough to make me understand
The baseness of the injuries you did her.
That little training I have had, is war :
I may behave myself rudely in peace ;
I would not, though. I shall not need to tell you,
I am but young, and would be loth to lose
Honour, that is not easily gained again.
Fairly I mean to deal : The age is strict
For single combats ; and we shall be stopp'd,

If it be publish'd. If you like your sword,
Use it ; if mine appear a better to you,
Change : for the ground is this, and this the time,
To end our difference.

AMIN. : Charitable youth,
(If thou be'st such) think not I will maintain
So strange a wrong : And, for thy sister's sake,
Know, that I could not think that desperate thing
I durst not do ; yet, to enjoy this world,
I would not see her ; for, beholding thee,
I am I know not what. If I have aught,
That may content thee, take it, and begone ;
For death is not so terrible as thou.
Thine eyes shoot guilt into me.

ASP. : Thus, she swore,
Thou wouldst behave thyself ; and give me words
That would fetch tears into mine eyes ; and so,
Thou dost indeed. But yet she bade me watch,
Lest I were cozen'd ; and be sure to fight
Ere I return'd.

AMIN. : That must not be with me.
For her I'll die directly ; but against her
Will never hazard it.

ASP. : You must be urged.
I do not deal uncivilly with those
That dare to fight ; but such a one as you
Must be used thus. [*She strikes him.*

AMIN. : I pr'ythee, youth, take heed.
Thy sister is a thing to me so much
Above mine honour, that I can endure
All this. Good gods ! a blow I can endure !
But stay not, lest thou draw a timeless death
Upon thyself.

ASP. : Thou art some prating fellow ;
One, that hath studied out a trick to talk,
And move soft-hearted people ; to be kicked
[*She kicks him.*
Thus, to be kick'd !—Why should he be so slow
In giving me my death ? [*Aside.*

AMIN. : A man can bear
No more, and keep his flesh. Forgive me, then !
I would endure yet, if I could. Now show [*Draws.*
The spirit thou pretend'st, and understand,
Thou hast no hour to live.——
[*They fight ;* ASPATIA *is wounded.*
What dost thou mean ?
Thou canst not fight : the blows thou mak'st at me
Are quite besides ; and those I offer at thee,
Thou spread'st thine arms, and tak'st upon thy breast,
Alas, defenceless !

ASP. : I have got enough,
And my desire. There is no place so fit
For me to die as here.

Enter EVADNE, *her Hands bloody, with a Knife.*

EVAD. : Amintor, I am loaden with events,
That fly to make thee happy. I have joys,
That in a moment can call back thy wrongs,
And settle thee in thy free state again.
It is Evadne still that follows thee,
But not her mischiefs.

AMIN. : Thou canst not fool me to believe again ;
But thou hast looks and things so full of news,
That I am stay'd.

EVAD. : Noble Amintor, put off thy amaze,
Let thine eyes loose, and speak : Am I not fair ?
Looks not Evadne beauteous, with these rites now
Were those hours half so lovely in thine eyes,
When our hands met before the holy man ?
I was too foul within to look fair then :
Since I knew ill, I was not free till now.

AMIN. : There is presage of some important thing
About thee, which, it seems, thy tongue hath lost.
Thy hands are bloody, and thou hast a knife !

EVAD. : In this consists thy happiness and mine.
Joy to Amintor ! for the king is dead.

AMIN. : Those have most power to hurt us, that we love ;
We lay our sleeping lives within their arms !
Why, thou hast raised up Mischief to his height,
And found out one, to out-name thy other faults.
Thou hast no intermission of thy sins,
But all thy life is a continued ill.
Black is thy colour now, disease thy nature.
Joy to Amintor ! Thou hast touch'd a life,
The very name of which had power to chain
Up all my rage, and calm my wildest wrongs.

EVAD. : 'Tis done : and since I could not find a way
To meet thy love so clear as through his life,
I cannot now repent it.

AMIN. : Couldst thou procure the gods to speak to me,
To bid me love this woman, and forgive,
I think I should fall out with them. Behold,
Here lies a youth whose wounds bleed in my breast,
Sent by his violent fate, to fetch his death
From my slow hand : And, to augment my woe,
You now are present, stain'd with a king's blood,
Violently shed. This keeps night here,
And throws an unknown wilderness about me.

ASP. : Oh, oh, oh !

AMIN. : No more ; pursue me not.

EVAD. : Forgive me then,
And take me to thy bed. We may not part. [*Kneels.*

AMIN. : Forbear ! Be wise, and let my rage go this way.

EVAD. : 'Tis you that I would stay, not it.

AMIN. : Take heed ;
It will return with me.

EVAD. : If it must be,
I shall not fear to meet it ; take me home.
AMIN. : Thou monster of cruelty, forbear !
EVAD. : For heaven's sake, look more calm : thine eyes are sharper
Than thou canst make thy sword.
AMIN. : Away, away !
Thy knees are more to me than violence.
I am worse than sick to see knees follow me,
For that I must not grant. For Heaven's sake stand.
EVAD. : Receive me, then.
AMIN. : I dare not stay thy language ;
In midst of all my anger and my grief,
Thou dost awake something that troubles me,
And says, " I loved thee once." I dare not stay ;
There is no end of woman's reasoning. [*Leaves her.*
EVAD. : Amintor, thou shalt love me now again :
Go ; I am calm. Farewell, and peace for ever !
Evadne, whom thou hat'st, will die for thee. [*Kills herself.*
AMIN. : I have a little human nature yet,
That's left for thee, that bids me stay thy hand. [*Returns.*
EVAD. : Thy hand was welcome, but it came too late.
Oh, I am lost ! the heavy sleep makes haste. [*She dies.*
ASP. : Oh, oh, oh !
AMIN. : This earth of mine doth tremble, and I feel
A stark affrighted motion in my blood :
My soul grows weary of her house, and I
All over am a trouble to myself.
There is some hidden power in these dead things,
That calls my flesh unto 'em : I am cold !
Be resolute, and bear 'em company.
There's something, yet, which I am loth to leave.
There's man enough in me to meet the fears
That death can bring ; and yet, 'would it were done !
I can find nothing in the whole discourse
Of death, I durst not meet the boldest way ;
Yet still, betwixt the reason and the act,
The wrong I to Aspatia did stands up :
I have not such another fault to answer.
Though she may justly arm herself with scorn
And hate of me, my soul will part less troubled,
When I have paid to her in tears my sorrow.
I will not leave this act unsatisfied,
If all that's left in me can answer it.
ASP. : Was it a dream ? There stands Amintor still ;
Or I dream still.
AMIN. : How dost thou ? Speak ! receive my love and help.
Thy blood climbs up to his old place again :
There's hope of thy recovery.
ASP. : Did you not name Aspatia ?
AMIN. : I did.
ASP. : And talk'd of tears and sorrows unto her ?
AMIN. : 'Tis true ; and till these happy signs in thee
Did stay my course, 'twas thither I was going.

ASP. : Thou art there already, and these wounds are hers :
Those threats I brought with me sought not revenge ;
But came to fetch this blessing from thy hand.
I am Aspatia yet.
AMIN. : Dare my soul ever look abroad again ?
ASP. : I shall surely live, Amintor ; I am well :
A kind of healthful joy wanders within me.
AMIN. : The world wants lives to excuse thy loss !
Come, let me bear thee to some place of help.
ASP. : Amintor, thou must stay ; I must rest here ;
My strength begins to disobey my will.
How dost thou, my best soul ? I would fain live
Now, if I could : Wouldst thou have loved me then ?
AMIN. : Alas ?
All that I am's not worth a hair from thee.
ASP. : Give me thy hand ; my hands grope up and down,
And cannot find thee : I am wondrous sick :
Have I thy hand, Amintor ?
AMIN. : Thou greatest blessing of the world, thou hast.
ASP. : I do believe thee better than my sense.
Oh ! I must go. Farewell ! [*Dies.*
AMIN. : She swoons ! Aspatia !—Help ! for Heaven's sake, water !
Such as may chain life ever to this frame.—
Aspatia, speak !—What, no help yet ? I fool !
I'll chafe her temples : Yet there's nothing stirs ;
Some hidden power tell her, Amintor calls,
And let her answer me !—Aspatia, speak !—
I have heard, if there be any life, but bow
The body thus, and it will show itself.
Oh, she is gone ! I will not leave her yet.
Since out of justice we must challenge nothing,
I'll call it mercy, if you'll pity me,
Ye heavenly powers ! and lend, for some few years,
The blessed soul to this fair seat again.
No comfort comes ; the gods deny me too !
I'll bow the body once again.—Aspatia !—
The soul is fled for ever ; and I wrong
Myself, so long to lose her company.
Must I talk now ? Here's to be with thee, love ! [*Stabs himself.*

Enter SERVANT.

SERV. : This is a great grace to my lord, to have the new king come to him : I must tell him he is entering.—Oh, God ! Help ! help !

Enter LYSIPPUS, MELANTIUS, CALIANAX, CLEON, DIPHILUS, *and* STRATO.

LYS. : Where's Amintor ?
SERV. : Oh, there, there.
LYS. : How strange is this !
CAL. : What should we do here ?
MEL. : These deaths are such acquainted things with me,
That yet my heart dissolves not. May I stand
Stiff here for ever ! Eyes, call up your tears !
This is Amintor : Heart ! he was my friend ;

Melt ; now it flows.—Amintor, give a word
To call me to thee.

AMIN. : Oh !

MEL. : Melantius calls his friend Amintor. Oh !
Thy arms are kinder to me than thy tongue !
Speak, speak !

AMIN. : What ?

MEL. : That little word was worth all the sounds
That ever I shall hear again.

DIPH. : Oh, brother !
Here lies your sister slain ; you lose yourself
In sorrow there.

MEL. : Why, Diphilus, it is
A thing to laugh at, in respect of this :
Here was my sister, father, brother, son ;
All that I had !—Speak once again : What youth
Lies slain there by thee ?

AMIN. : 'Tis Aspatia.
My last is said. Let me give up my soul
Into thy bosom. [*Dies.*

CAL. : What's that ? what's that ? Aspatia !

MEL. : I never did
Repent the greatness of my heart till now ;
It will not burst at need.

CAL. : My daughter dead here too ! And you have all fine new tricks to grieve ; but I ne'er knew any but direct crying.

MEL. : I am a prattler ; but no more. [*Offers to kill himself.*

DIPH. : Hold, brother.

LYS. : Stop him.

DIPH. : Fie ! how unmanly was this offer in you ;
Does this become our strain ?

CAL. : I know not what the matter is, but I am grown very kind, and am friends with you. You have given me that among you will kill me quickly ; but I'll go home, and live as long as I can.

MEL. : His spirit is but poor that can be kept
From death for want of weapons.
Is not my hand a weapon sharp enough
To stop my breath ? or, if you tie down those,
I vow, Amintor, I will never eat,
Or drink, or sleep, or have to do with that
That may preserve life ! This I swear to keep.

LYS. : Look to him though, and bear those bodies in.
May this a fair example be to me,
To rule with temper : For, on lustful kings,
Unlook'd-for, sudden deaths from heaven are sent ;
But curst is he that is their instrument. [*Exeunt.*

c. 1615

THE CHANCES

(By JOHN FLETCHER)

Of the plays included in the admirable Cambridge edition of Beaumont and Fletcher approximately one eighth are by Beaumont and Fletcher. A number were written by Fletcher and Massinger, a few by Fletcher in collaboration with other dramatists, including *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (probably) with Shakespeare. Nineteen or twenty plays are by Fletcher alone. *The Chances* shows Fletcher in his most characteristic mood. It was perhaps the most characteristic mood of "Elizabethan" England—of the England that died with Charles the First. The England that survived has much of its virtue, little of its colour. Fletcher and his fellows knew better than to place their Englishman and Englishwoman in a drab English setting. They gave them for preference the sun and the glamour of Italy or Spain. Mr. Jones became Don John, and became him very well. Also perhaps it was safer for purposes of plain-speaking. These were poets who chose to call a spade a spade. England became refined in the succeeding generation. Even modern playwrights shock us occasionally, but they do not call a spade a spade. That is one reason why Fletcher is out of fashion. It is not easy to think of another.

The most famous of the Beaumont-Fletcher plays, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, was a sort of anglicised version of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. The comedy of *The Chances* was founded on another of Cervantes' novels.

THE CHANCES

Characters

DUKE OF FERRARA
PETRUCCIO, *Governour of* BOLOGNIA
Don JOHN, *Don* FREDERICK, *two Spanish Gentlemen and Comerades*
ANTONIO, *an old stout Gentleman, Kinsman to* PETRUCCIO
THREE GENTLEMEN, *friends to the Duke*
TWO GENTLEMEN, *friends to* PETRUCCIO
FRANCISCO, *a Musician*, ANTONIO'S *Boy*
PETER VECCHIO, *a Teacher of Latine and Musick, a reputed Wizard*
PETER *and* ANTHONIE, *two Servants to Don* JOHN *and* FREDERICK
A SURGEON

Women

CONSTANCIA, *Sister* to PETRUCCIO, *and Mistress to the* DUKE
GENTLEWOMAN, *Servant to* CONSTANCIA
OLD GENTLEWOMAN, *Landlady to Don* JOHN *and* FREDERICK
CONSTANCIA, *a Whore to old Antonio*
BAWD

The Scene—BOLOGNIA

ACT I

SCENE I

Enter 2. Serving-men, PETER *and* ANTHONY.

PETER : I would we were remov'd from this town, *Anthony*,
That we might taste some quiet ; for mine own part,
I'm almost melted with continual trotting
After enquiries, dreams, and revelations,
Of who knows whom, or where ? serve wenching soldiers,
That knows no other Paradise but Plackets :
I'll serve a Priest in Lent first, and eat Bell-ropes.

ANT. : Thou art the froward'st fool—
PET. : Why, good tame *Anthonie* ?
Tell me but this ; to what end came we hither?
ANT. : To wait upon our Masters.
PET. : But how, *Anthony* ?
Answer me that ; resolve me there, good *Anthony* ?
ANT. : To serve their uses.
PET. : Shew your uses, *Anthony*.
ANT. : To be imploy'd in any thing.
PET. : No *Anthony*,
Not any thing I take it ; nor that thing
We travel to discover, like new islands ;
A salt itch serve such uses ; in things of moment
Concerning things, I grant ye, not things errant,
Sweet Ladies things, and things to thank the Surgeon ;
In no such things, sweet *Anthony*, put case—
ANT. : Come, come, all will be mended ; this invisible woman
Of infinite report for shape and vertue,
That bred us all this trouble to no purpose,
They are determin'd now no more to think on,
But fall close to their studies.
PET. : Was there ever
Men known to run mad with report before ?
Or wonder after [that] they know not where
To find ? or if found, how to enjoy ? are men's brains
Made now adays of malt, that their affections
Are never sober ? but like drunken people
Founder at every new Fame ? I do believe too
That men in love are ever drunk, as drunken men
Are ever loving.
ANT. : Prithee be thou sober,
And know, that they are none of those, not guilty
Of the least vanity of love, only a doubt
Fame might too far report, or rather flatter
The Graces of this Woman, made them curious
To find the truth, which since they find so blocked
And lockt up from their searches, they are now setled
To give the wonder over.
PET. : Would they were setled.
To give me some new shoos too : for I'll be sworn
These are e'en worn out to the reasonable souls
In their good worships business ; and some sleep
Would not do much amiss, unless they mean
To make a Bell-man on me ; and what now
Mean they to study, *Anthony*, moral Philosophy
After their mar-all women ?
ANT. : Mar a fools head.
PET. : 'Twill mar two fools heads and they take not heed,
Besides the Giblets to 'em.
ANT. : Will you walk, Sir,
And talk more out of hearing ? your fools head
May chance to find a wooden night-cap else.
PET. : I never lay in any.

Enter Don JOHN, *and* FREDERICK.

ANT. : Then leave your lying,
And your blind prophesying : here they come,
You had best tell them as much.
PET. : I am no tell-tale. [*Exeunt.*
JOHN : I would we could have seen her though ; for sure
She must be some rare Creature, or Report lies.
All mens Reports too.
FRED. : I could well wish I had seen her ;
But since she is so conceal'd, so beyond venture
Kept and preserv'd from view, so like a Paradise,
Plac'd where no knowledge can come near her ; so guarded,
As 'twere impossible, though known, to reach her,
I have made up my belief.
JOHN : Hang me from this hour
If I more think upon her, or believe her,
But as she came a strong Report unto me,
So the next Fame shall lose her.
FRED. : 'Tis the next way ;
But whither are you walking ?
JOHN : My old Round
After my meat, and then to Bed.
FRED. : 'Tis healthful.
JOHN : Will not you stir ?
FRED. : I have a little business.
JOHN : Upon my life this Lady still—
FRED. : Then you will lose it.
JOHN : 'Pray let's walk together.
FRED. : Now I cannot.
JOHN : I have something to impart.
FRED. : An hour hence.
I will not miss to meet you.
JOHN : Where ?
FRED. : I'th' high street ;
For not to lie, I have a few Devotions
To do first, then I am yours.
JOHN : Remember. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, *and two Gentlemen.*

ANT. : Cut his wind-pipe I say.
1 GENT. : Fye, *Antonio.*
ANT. : Or knock his brains out first, and then forgive him,
If you do thrust, be sure it be to th'hilts,
A Surgeon may see through him.
1 GENT. : You are too violent.
2 GENT. : Too open undiscreet.
PET. : Am I not ruin'd ?
The honour of my house crack'd ? my bloud poyson'd ?
My Credit and my Name ?
2 GENT. : Be sure it be so,
Before ye use this violence : Let not doubt,

And a suspecting anger so much sway ye,
Your wisedom may be question'd.

ANT. : I say kill him,
And then dispute the cause ; cut off what may be,
And what is shall be safe.

2 GENT. : Hang up a true man,
Because 'tis possible he may be thievish !
Alas, is this good Justice ?

PET. : I know as certain
As day must come again, as clear as truth
And open as belief can lay it to me,
That I am basely wrong'd, wrong'd above recompence ;
Maliciously abus'd, blasted for ever
In name and honour, lost to all remembrance,
But what is smear'd, and shameful ; I must kill him,
Necessity compells me.

1 GENT. : But think better.

PET. : There is no other cure left ; yet witness with me,
All that is fair in man, all that is noble,
I am not greedy of this life I seek for,
Nor thirst to shed mans blood, and would 'twere possible,
I wish it with my soul, so much I tremble
To offend the sacred Image of my Maker,
My Sword could only kill his Crimes ; no, 'tis Honour,
Honour, my noble friends, that Idol, Honour,
That all the world now worships, not *Petruchio*
Must do this Justice.

ANT. : Let it once be done,
And 'tis no matter, whether you, or honour,
Or both, be accessary.

2 GENT. : Do you weigh, *Petruchio*,
The value of the person, power, and greatness,
And what this spark may kindle ?

PET. : To perform it,
So much I am ty'd to Reputation,
And Credit of my house, let it raise wild-fires,
That all this Dukedom smoak, and storms that toss me
Into the waves of everlasting ruine,
Yet I must through ; if ye dare side me.

ANT. : Dare ?

PET. : Y'are friends indeed, if not.

2 GENT. : Here's none flyes from you,
Do it in what design ye please, we'll back ye.

1 GENT. : But then be sure ye kill him.

2 GENT. : Is the cause
So mortal, nothing but his life ?

PET. : Believe me,
A less offence has been the desolation
Of a whole name.

2 GENT. : No other way to purge it ?

PET. : There is, but never to be hoped for.

2 GENT. : Think an hour more,

And if then ye find no safer Road to guide ye,
We'll set up our Rests too.
ANT. : Mine's up already,
And hang him for my part
Goes less than life.
2 GENT. : If we see noble cause, 'tis like our Swords
May be as free and forward as your words. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Enter Don JOHN.

JOHN : The civil order of this Town, *Bologna*,
Makes it belov'd and honour'd of all Travellers,
As a most safe retirement in all troubles ;
Beside the wholsome seat, and noble temper
Of those minds that inhabit it, safely wise,
And to all strangers vertuous ; But I see
My admiration has drawn night upon me,
And longer to expect my friend may pull me
Into suspicion of too late a stirrer,
Which all good Governments are jealous of.
I'll home, and think at liberty : yet certain,
'Tis not so far night as I thought ; for see,
A fair house yet stands open, yet all about it
Are close, and no lights stirring, there may be foul play ;
I'le venture to look in : if there be knaves,
I may do a good office. [*women within.*
WITHIN : Signieur ?
JOHN : What ? how is this ?
WITHIN : Signieur *Fabritio ?*
JOHN : I'le go nearer.
WITHIN : *Fabritio ?*
JOH. : This is a womans tongue, here may be good done.
WITHIN : Who's there ?
Fabritio ?
JOHN : I.
WITHIN : Where are ye ?
JOH. : Here.
WITHIN : O come, for Heavens sake !
JOH. : I must see what this means.

Enter Woman with a Child.

WITHIN : I have stay'd this long hour for you, make no noise,
For things are in strange trouble : here, be secret,
'Tis worth your care ; begon now ; more eyes watch us,
Than may be for our safeties.
JOH. : Hark ye ?
WITHIN : Peace : good night.
JOH. : She is gone, and I am loaden ; fortune for me ;
It weighs well, and it feels well ; it may chance
To be some pack of worth : byth' mass 'tis heavie ;
If it be Coyn or Jewels, 'tis worth welcom :
I'le ne're refuse a fortune : I am confident
'Tis of no common price : now to my lodging :
If it hit right, I'le bless this night. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV

Enter FREDERICK.

FRED : 'Tis strange,
I cannot meet him ; sure he has encountered
Some light o' love or other, and there means
To play at in and in for this night. Well *Don John*,
If you do spring a leak, or get an itch,
Till ye claw off your curl'd pate, thank your night-walks :
You must be still a bootehalling : one round more,
Though it be late, I'le venture to discover ye,
I do not like your out-leaps. [*Exit.*

SCENE V

Enter DUKE, *and* 3 GENTLEMEN.

DUKE : Welcom to Town, are ye all fit?
1 GENT. : To point Sir.
DUKE : Where are the horses ?
2 GENT. : Where they were appointed.
DUKE : Be private, and whatsoever fortune
Offer it self, let's stand sure.
3 GENT. : Fear not us,
E're ye shall be endangered, or deluded,
We'll make a black night on't.
DUKE : No more, I know it ;
You know your Quarters ?
1 GENT. : Will you go alone, Sir ?
DUKE : Ye shall not be far from me, the least noise
Shall bring ye to my rescue.
2 GENT. : We are counsell'd. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI

Enter Don JOHN.

JOHN : Was ever man so paid for being curious ?
Ever so bob'd for searching out adventures,
As I am ? did the Devil lead me ? must I needs be peeping
Into mens houses where I had no business,
And make my self a mischief ? 'Tis well carried ;
I must take other mens occasions on me,
And be I know not whom : most finely handled :
What have I got by this now ? what's the purchase ?
A piece of evening Arras work, a child,
Indeed an Infidel : this comes of peeping :
A lump got out of laziness ; good white bread
Let's have no bawling with ye : s'death, have I
Known wenches thus long, all the ways of wenches
Their snares and subtilties ? have I read over
All their School learnings, div'd into their quiddits,
And am I now bum-fidled with a Bastard ?
Fetch'd over with a Card of five, and in mine old days,
After the dire massacre of a million
Of Maiden-heads ? caught the common way, i'th' night too

Under anothers name, to make the matter
Carry more weight about it? well *Don John*,
You will be wiser one day, when ye have purchas'd
A beavy of these Butter-prints together,
With searching out conceal'd iniquities,
Without commission: why, it would never grieve me,
If I had got this Ginger-bread: never stirr'd me,
So I had had a stroak for't: 't had been Justice
Then to have kept it; but to raise a dayrie
For other mens adulteries, consume my self in candles,
And scowring works, in Nurses Bells and Babies,
Only for charity, for meer I thank you,
A little troubles me: the least touch for it,
Had but my breeches got it, had contented me.
Whose e're it is, sure 't had a wealthy Mother,
For 'tis well cloathed, and if I be not cozen'd,
Well lin'd within: to leave it here were barbarous,
And ten to one would kill it: a more sin
Then his that got it: well, I will dispose on't,
And keep it, as they keep deaths heads in rings,
To cry *memento* to me; no more peeping.
Now all the danger is to qualifie
The good old gentlewoman, at whose house we live,
For she will fall upon me with a Catechism
Of four hours long: I must endure all;
For I will know this Mother: Come good wonder,
Let you and I be jogging: your starv'd trebble
Will waken the rude watch else: all that be
Curious night-walkers, may they find my fee. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII

Enter FREDERICK.

FRED.: Sure he's gone home:
I have beaten all the purlews,
But cannot bolt him: if he be a bobbing,
'Tis not my care can cure him: To morrow morning
I shall have further knowledge from a Surgeon's—
Where he lyes moor'd, to mend his leaks.

Enter CONSTANTIA.

CON.: I'm ready,
And through a world of dangers am flown to ye.
Be full of haste and care, we are undone else.
Where are your people? which way must we travel!
For Heaven sake stay not here Sir.

FRED.: What may this prove?

CON.: Alas I am mistaken, lost, undone,
For ever perish'd. Sir, for Heaven sake tell me,
Are ye a Gentleman?

FRED.: I am.

CON.: Of this place?

FRED.: No, born in *Spain*.

CON. : As ever you lov'd honour,
As ever your desires may gain their ends,
Do a poor wretched woman but this benefit,
For I am forc'd to trust ye.
FRED. : Y'ave charm'd me,
Humanity and honour bids me help ye ;
And if I fail your trust.—
CON. : The time's too dangerous
To stay your protestations : I believe ye,
Alas, I must believe ye : From this place,
Good noble Sir, remove me instantly,
And for a time, where nothing but your self,
And honest conversation may come near me,
In some secure place se[t]tle me : what I am
And why thus boldly I commit my credit
Into a strangers hand, the fears and dangers,
That force me to this wild course, at more leisure
I shall reveal unto you.
FRED. : Come, be hearty,
He must strike through my life that takes ye from me.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII

Enter PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, *and* 2 GENT.

PETR. : He will sure come. Are ye well arm'd ?
ANT. : Never fear us.
Here's that will make 'em dance without a Fiddle.
PETR. : We are to look for no weak foes, my friends,
Nor unadvised ones.
ANT. : Best gamesters make the best game,
We shall fight close and handsom then.
1 GENT. : *Antonio*,
You are a thought too bloudy.
ANT. : Why ? all Physicians
And penny Almanacks allow the opening
Of veins this moneth : why do ye talk of bloudy ?
What come we for, to fall to cuffes for apples ?
What, would ye make the cause a Cudgel quarrel ?
On what terms stands this man ? is not his honour
Open'd to his hand, and pickt out like an Oyster ?
His credit like a quart pot knockt together,
Able to hold no liquor ? clear but this point.
PETR. : Speak softly, gentle cousin.
ANT. : I'le speak truly ;
What should men do ally'd to these disgraces,
Lick o're his enemie, sit down, and dance him ?
2 GENT. : You are as far o'th' bow hand now.
ANT. : And crie ;
That's my fine boy, thou wilt do so no more child.
PETR. : Here are no such cold pities.
ANT. : By Saint *Jaques*
They shall not find me one : here's old tough *Andrew*,
A special friend of mine, and he but hold,

I'le strike 'em such a hornpipe : knocks I come for,
And the best bloud I light on ; I profess it,
Not to scare Coster-mongers ; If I lose mine own,
Mine audits cast, and farewel five and fifty.

PET. : Let's talk no longer, place your selves with silence,
As I directed ye, and when time calls us,
As ye are friends, so shew your selves.

ANT. : So be it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX

Enter Don JOHN, *and his* LAND-LADY.

LAND. : Nay Son, if this be your regard.

JOHN : Good Mother.

LAN. : Good me no goods ; your cousin, and your self
Are welcom to me, whilst you bear your selves
Like honest and true Gentlemen : Bring hither
To my house, that have ever been reputed
A Gentlewoman of a decent, and fair carriage,
And so behav'd my self—

JOHN : I know ye have.

LAN. : Bring hither, as I say, to make my name
Stink in my neighbours nostrils ? your Devises,
Your Brats, got out of Alligant, and broken oaths ?
Your Linsey Woolsy work, your hasty puddings ?
I, foster up your filch'd iniquities ?
Y'are deceiv'd in me, Sir, I am none
Of those receivers.

JOHN : Have I not sworn unto you,
'Tis none of mine, and shew'd you how I found it ?

LAND. : Ye found an easie fool that let you get it,
She had better have worn pasterns.

JOHN : Will ye hear me ?

LAN. : Oaths ? what do you care for oaths to gain your ends,
When ye are high and pamper'd ? What Saint know ye ?
Or what Religion, but your purpos'd lewdness,
Is to be look'd for of ye ? nay, I will tell ye,
You will then swear like accus'd Cut-purses,
As far off truth too ; and lye beyond all Faulconers :
I'me sick to see this dealing.

JOHN : Heaven forbid Mother.

LAN. : Nay, I am very sick.

JOHN : Who waits there ?

ANT. : Sir. [*within.*

JOHN : Bring down the bottle of Canary wine.

LAN. : Exceeding sick, Heav'n help me.

JOHN : Haste ye Sirrah,
I must ev'n make her drunk ; nay gentle mother.

LAN. : Now fie upon ye, was it for this purpose
You fetch'd your evening walks for your digestions,
For this pretended holiness ? no weather,
Not before day could hold ye from the Matins.
Were these your bo-peep prayers ? ye'have pray'd well,
And with a learned zeal : watcht well too ; your Saint
It seems was pleas'd as well : still sicker, sicker.

Enter ANTHONY, *with a bottle of wine.*

JOH. : There is no talking to her till I have drencht her.
Give me : here mother take a good round draught,
'Twill purge spleen from your spirits : deeper mother.
LAN. : I, I, son, you imagine this will mend all.
JOHN : All i' faith Mother.
LAN. : I confess the Wine
Will do his part.
JOHN : I'le pledge ye.
LAN. : But son *John.*
JOH. : I know your meaning mother ; touch it once more,
Alas you look not well ; take a round draught,
It warms the bloud well, and restores the colour,
And then we'll talk at large.
LAND. : A civil Gentleman ?
A stranger ? one the Town holds a good regard of ?
JOHN : Nay I will silence thee.
LAN. : One that should weigh his fair name ? oh, a stitch !
JOH. : There's nothing better for a stitch, good Mother,
Make no spare of it, as you love your health,
Mince not the matter.
LAND. : As I said, a Gentleman,
Lodge in my house ? now heav'ns my comfort, Signior !
JOHN : I look'd for this.
LAN. : I did not think you would have us'd me thus ;
A woman of my credit : one, heaven knows,
That lov'd you but too tenderly.
JOHN : Dear Mother,
I ever found your kindness, and [ac]knowledge it.
LAN. : No, no, I am a fool to counsel ye. Where's the infant ?
Come, let's see your Workmanship.
JOHN : None of mine, Mother,
But there 'tis, and a lusty one.
LAND. : Heaven bless thee,
Thou hadst a hasty making ; but the best is,
'Tis many a good mans fortune : as I live
Your own eyes Signior, and the nether lip
As like ye, as ye had spit it.
JOHN : I am glad on't.
LAN. : Bless me, what things are these ?
JOHN : I thought my labour
Was not all lost, 'tis gold, and these are jewels,
Both rich, and right I hope.
LAN. : Well, well son *John,*
I see ye are a wood-man, and can chuse
Your dear, though it be i'th' dark, all your discretion
Is not yet lost ; this was well clapt aboard :
Here I am with you now ; when as they say
Your pleasure comes with profit ; when ye must needs do,
Do where ye may be done to, 'tis a wisedom
Becomes a young man well : be sure of one thing,
Lose not your labour and your time together,
It seasons of a fool, son, time is pretious,

Work wary whilst ye have it : since ye must traffick
Sometimes this slippery way, take sure hold Signior,
Trade with no broken Merchants, make your lading,
As you would make your rest, adventurously,
But with advantage ever.

JOHN : All this time Mother,
The child wants looking to, wants meat and Nurses.

LAN. : Now blessing o' thy care ; it shall have all,
And instantly ; I'le seek a Nurse, my self, son ;
'Tis a sweet child : ah my young *Spaniard*,
Take you no further care Sir.

JOHN : Yes of these Jewels,
I must by your leave Mother : these are yours,
To make your care the stronger : for the rest
I'le find a Master ; the gold for bringing up on't,
I freely render to your charge.

LAN. : No more words.
Nor no more children, (good son) as you love me,
This may do well.

JOHN : I shall observe your Morals.
But where's *Don Frederick*, Mother ?

LAN. : Ten to one
About the like adventure : he told me,
He was to find you out. [*Exit.*

JOHN : Why should he stay thus ?
There may be some ill chance in't : sleep I will not,
Before I have found him : now this woman's pleas'd,
I'le seek my friend out, and my care is eas'd. [*Exit.*

SCENE X

Enter DUKE, *and* GENTLEMEN.

1 GENT. : Believe Sir, 'tis as possible to do it,
As to remove the City ; the main faction
Swarm th[r]ough the streets like hornets arm'd with angers
Able to ruine States : no safety left us,
Nor means to dye like men, if instantly
You draw not back again.

DUKE : May he be drawn
And quarter'd too, that turns now ; were I surer
Of death than thou art of thy fears, and with death
More than those fears are too.

1 GENT. : Sir, I fear not.

DU. : I would not crack my vow, start from my honour,
Because I may find danger ; wound my soul,
To keep my body safe.

1 GENT. : I speak not Sir,
Out of a baseness to you.

DU. : No, nor do not
Out of a baseness leave me : what is danger,
More than the weakness of our apprehensions ?
A poor cold part o'th' bloud ? who takes it hold of ?
Cowards, and wicked livers : valiant minds

Were made the Masters of it : and as hearty Sea-men
In desperate storms, stem with a little Rudder
The tumbling ruines of the Ocean :
So with their cause and swords do they do dangers.
Say we were sure to dye all in this venture,
As I am confident against it : is there any
Amongst us of so fat a sense, so pamper'd,
Would chuse luxuriously to lye a bed,
And purge away his spirit, send his soul out
In Sugar-sops, and Syrups? Give me dying
As dying ought to be, upon mine enemy,
Parting with man-kind, by a man that's manly :
Let 'em be all the world, and bring along
Cain's envy with 'em, I will on.

2 GENT. : You may Sir,
But with what safety?

1 GENT. : Since 'tis come to dying,
You shall perceive Sir, here be those amongst us
Can dye as decently as other men,
And with as little ceremony : on brave Sir.

DUKE : That's spoken heartily.

1 GENT. : And he that flinches,
May he dye lowzie in a ditch.

DUKE : No more dying,
There's no such danger in it :
What's a clock?

3 GENT. : Somewhat above your hour.

DUKE : Away then quickly,
Make no noise, and no tr[o]uble will attend us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XI

Enter FREDERICK, *and* PETER, (*with a candle.*)

FRED. : Give me the candle : so, go you out that way.

PETER : What have we now to do?

FRED. : And o' your life Sirrah,
Let none come near the door without my knowledge,
No not my Landlady, nor my friend.

PETER : 'Tis done Sir.

FRED. : Nor any serious business that concerns me.

PETER : Is the wind there again?

FRED. : Be gone.

PETER : I am Sir. [*Exit.*

Enter CONSTANTIA.

FRE. : Now enter without fear.—And noble Lady
That safety and civility ye wish'd for
Shall truly here attend you : no rude tongue
Nor rough behaviour knows this place, no wishes
Beyond the moderation of a man,
Dare enter here ; your own desires and Innocence,
Joyn'd to my vow'd obedience, shall protect you,
Were dangers more than doubts.

CONST. : Ye are truly noble,
And worth a womans trust : let it become me,
(I do beseech you, Sir) for all your kindness,
To render with my thanks, this worthless trifle ;
I may be longer troublesome.
FRED. : Fair offices
Are still their own rewards : Heav'n bless me Lady
From selling civil courtesies : may it please ye,
If ye will force a favour to oblige me,
Draw but that cloud aside to satisfie me
For what good Angel I am engag'd.
CONST. : It shall be.
For I am truly confident ye are honest :
The Piece is scarce worth looking on.
FRED. : Trust me
The abstract of all beauty, soul of sweetness,
Defend me honest thoughts, I shall grow wild else :
What eyes are there, rather what little heavens,
To stir mens contemplations ! what a Paradise
Runs through each part she has ! good bloud be temperate :
I must look off : too excellent an object
Confounds the sense that sees it. Noble Lady,
If there be any further service to cast on me,
Let it be worth my life, so much I honour ye,
Or the engagement of whole Families.
CONST. : Your service is too liberal, worthy Sir,
Thus far I shall entreat.
FRED. : Command me Lady,
You make your power too poor.
CONST. : That presently
With all convenient haste, you would retire
Unto the street you found me in.
FRED. : 'Tis done.
CONST. : There, if you find a Gentleman opprest
With force and violence, do a mans office,
And draw your sword to rescue him.
FRED. : He's safe,
Be what he will, and let his foes be Devils,
Arm'd with your pity, I shall conjure 'em.
Retire, this key will guide ye : all things necessary
Are there before ye.
CONST. : All my prayers go with ye. [*Exit.*
FRED. : Ye clap on proof upon me : men say gold
Does all, engages all, works through all dangers :
Now I say beauty can do more : The Kings Exchequer,
Nor all his wealthy *Indies*, could not draw me
Through half those miseries this piece of pleasure
Might make me leap into : we are all like sea-Cards,
All our endeavours and our motions,
(As they do the North) still point at beauty,
Still at the fairest : for a handsom woman,
(Setting my soul aside) it should go hard,
But I would strain my body : yet to her,
Unless it be her own free gratitude,

Hopes ye shall dye, and thou tongue rot within me,
E're I infringe my faith : now to my rescue. [*Exit.*

ACT II

SCENE I

Enter DUKE, *pursued by* PETRUCCIO, ANTONIO, *and that Faction.*

DUKE : You will not all oppress me ?
ANT. : Kill him i'th wanton eye : let me come to him.
DUKE : Then ye shall buy me dearly.
PETR. : Say you so Sir ?
ANT. : I say cut his Wezand, spoil his piping ;
Have at your love-sick heart Sir.

Enter Don JOHN.

JOHN : Sure 'tis fighting.
My friend may be engag'd : fie Gentlemen,
This is unmanly odds.
ANT. : I'le stop your mouth Sir.
JOHN : Nay, then have at thee freely :
There's a plumb Sir to satisfie your longing.
[DU. *falls down, Don* JOHN *bestrides him.*
PETR. : Away : I hope I have sped him : here comes rescue,
We shall be endangered : where's *Antonio* ?
ANT. : I must have one thrust more Sir.
JOHN : Come up to me.
ANT. : A mischief confound your fingers.
PETR. : How is't ?
ANT. : Well :
Ha's given me my *quietus est*, I felt him
In my small guts, I'me sure, has feez'd me :
This comes of siding with ye.
2 GENT. : Can you go Sir ?
ANT. : I should go man, and my head were off,
Never talk of going.
PETR. : Come, all shall be well then,
I hear more rescue coming.

Enter the DUKE's *Faction.*

ANT. : Let's turn back then ;
My skull's uncloven yet, let me but kill.
PETR. : Away for Heaven sake with him.
JOHN : How is't ?
DUKE : Well Sir,
Only a little stagger'd.
FACTION DUKE : Let's pursue 'em.
DU. : No not a man, I charge ye : thanks good coat,
Thou hast sav'd me a shrewd welcom : 'twas put home too,
With a good mind I'me sure on't.
JOHN : Are ye safe then ?
DUKE : My thanks to you brave Sir, whose timely valour,
And manly courtesie came to my rescue.

JOHN : Ye'had foul play offer'd ye, and shame befal him
That can pass by oppression.
DUKE : May I crave Sir,
But thus much honour more, to know your name?
And him I am so bound to?
JOHN : For the Bond Sir,
'Tis every good mans tye : to know me further
Will little profit ye ; I am a stranger,
My Country *Spain* ; my name *Don John*, a Gentleman
That lye here for my study.
DUKE : I have heard Sir,
Much worthy mention of ye, yet I find
Fame short of what ye are.
JOHN : You are pleas'd Sir,
To express your courtesie : may I demand
As freely what you are, and what mischance
Cast you into this danger?
DUKE : For this present
I must desire your pardon : you shall know me
E're it be long Sir, and a nobler thanks
Than now my will can render.
JOHN : Your will's your own Sir.
DUKE : What is't you look for sir, have you lost any thing?
JOHN : Only my hat i'th' scuffle ; sure these fellows
Were night-snaps.
DUKE : No, believe Sir : pray ye use mine,
For 'twill be hard to find your own now.
JOHN : No Sir.
DU. : Indeed ye shall, I can command another :
I do beseech ye honour me.
JOHN : I will Sir,
And so I'le take my leave.
DUKE : Within these few days
I hope I shall be happy in your knowledge,
Till when I love your memory. [*Exit* DUKE, *&c.*
JOHN : I yours.
This is some noble fellow.

Enter FREDERICK.

FRED. : 'Tis [h]is tongue sure.
Don John?
JOHN : *Don Frederick*?
FRED. : Ye're fairly met Sir :
I thought ye had been a Bat-fowling : prethee tell me,
What Revelations hast thou had to night,
That home was never thought of?
JOHN : Revelations
I'le tell thee *Frederick*, but before I tell thee,
Settle thy understanding.
FRED. : 'Tis prepar'd, Sir.
JOHN : Why then mark what shall follow. This night *Frederick*,
This bawdy night.
FRED. : I thought no less.

JOHN : This blind night,
What dost think I have got ?
FRED. : The Pox it may be.
JOHN : Would 'twere no worse : ye talk of Revelations,
I have got a Revelation will reveal me
An arrant Coxcomb while I live.
FRED. : What is't ?
Thou hast lost nothing ?
JOHN : No, I have got I tell thee.
FRED. : What hast thou got ?
JOHN : One of the Infantry, a child.
FRED. : How ?
JOHN : A chopping child, man.
FRED. : 'Give ye joy, Sir.
JOHN : A lump of lewdness *Frederick*, that's the truth on't :
This Town's abominable.
FRED. : I still told ye *John*
Your whoring must come home ; I counsell'd ye :
But where no grace is—
JOHN : 'Tis none o' mine, man.
FRED. : Answer the Parish so.
JOHN : Cheated introth :
Peeping into a house, by whom I know not,
Nor where to find the place again : no *Frederick*,
Had I but kist the ring for't ; 'tis no poor one,
That's my best comfort, for't has brought about it
Enough to make it man.
FRED. : Where is't ?
JOHN : At home.
FRED. : A saving voyage : But what will you say Signior,
To him that searching out your serious worship,
Has met a stranger fortune ?
JOHN : How, good *Frederick* ?
A militant girle now to this boy would hit it ?
FRED. : No, mine's a nobler venture : What do you think Sir ?
Of a distressed Lady, one whose beauty
Would oversell all *Italy* ?
JOHN : Where is she—
FRED. : A woman of that rare behaviour,
So qualified, as admiration
Dwells round about her : of that perfect spirit—
JOHN : I marry Sir.
FRED. : That admirable carriage,
That sweetness in discourse ; young as the morning,
Her blushes staining his.
JOHN : But where's this creature ?
Shew me but that.
FRED. : That's all one, she's forth-coming,
I have her sure Boy.
JOHN : Hark ye *Frederick*,
What truck betwixt my Infant ?
FRED. : 'Tis too light Sir,
Stick to your charges good *Don John*, I am well.

JOHN : But is there such a wench ?
FRED. : First tell me this,
Did ye not lately as ye walk'd along,
Discover people that were arm'd, and likely
To do offence ?
JOHN : Yes marry, and they urg'd it
As far as they had spirit.
FRED. : Pray go forward.
JOH. : A Gentleman I found ingag'd amongst 'em,
It seems of noble breeding, I'm sure brave metal,
As I return'd to look you, I set in to him,
And without hurt (I thank heaven) rescued him,
And came my self off safe too.
FRED. : My work's done then :
And now to satisfie you, there is a woman,
Oh *John*, there is a woman—
JOHN : Oh, where is she ?
FRED. : And one of no less worth than I assure ye ;
And which is more, faln under my protection.
JOHN : I am glad of that : forward sweet *Frederick*.
FRED. : And which is more than that, by this nights wandring,
And which is most of all, she is at home too Sir.
JOHN : Come, let's be gone then.
FRED. : Yes, but 'tis most certain,
You cannot see her, *John*.
JOHN : Why ?
FRED. : She has sworn me
That none else shall come near her : not my Mother,
Till some few doubts are clear'd.
JOHN : Not look upon her ? What chamber is she in ?
FRED. : In ours.
JOHN : Let's go I say :
A womans oaths are wafers, break with making,
They must for modestie a little : we all know it.
FRED. : No, I'le assure you Sir.
JOHN : Not see her ?
I smell an old dog trick of yours, well *Frederick*,
Ye talkt to me of whoring, let's have fair play,
Square dealing I would wish ye.
FRED. : When 'tis come,
(Which I know never will be) to that issue,
Your spoon shall be as deep as mine Sir.
JOHN : Tell me,
And tell me true, is the cause honourable,
Or for your ease ?
FRED. : By all our friendship, *John*.
'Tis honest, and of great end.
JOHN : I am answer'd :
But let me see her though : leave the door open
As ye go in.
FRED. : I dare not.
JOHN : Not wide open,
But just so, as a jealous husband
Would level at his wanton wife through.

FRED. : That courtesie,
If ye desire no more, and keep it strictly,
I dare afford ye : come, 'tis now near morning. [*Exit.*

SCENE II

Enter PETER, *and* ANTHONY.

PET. : Nay the old woman's gone too.
ANT. : She's a Catterwauling
Among the gutters : But conceive me, *Peter*,
Where our good Masters should be ?
PET. : Where they should be
I do conceive, but where they are, good *Anthony*—
ANT. : I, there it goes : my Masters bo-peep with me,
With his sly popping in and out again,
Argued a cause, a frippery cause.
PET. : Believe me,
They bear up with some carvel.
ANT. : I do believe thee,
For thou hast such a Master for that chase,
That till he spend his main Mast—
PET. : Pray remember
Your courtesie good *Anthony*, and withal,
How long 'tis since your Master sprung a leak,
He had a sound one since he came. [*Lute sounds within.*
ANT. : Hark.
PET. : What ?
ANT. : Dost not hear a Lute ?
Again ?
PET. : Where is't ?
ANT. : Above in my Masters chamber.
PET. : There's no creature : he hath the key himself man.

SING *within.*

Merciless Love, whom nature hath deny'd
The use of eyes, lest thou should'st take a pride
And glorie in thy murthers : Why am I
That never yet trangress'd thy deity,
Never broke vow, from whose eyes never
Flew disdainfull dart
Whose hard heart never,
Slew those rewarders ?
Thou art young and fair,
Thy Mother soft and gentle as the air,
Thy holy fire still burning, blown with praier.
Then everlasting Love restrain thy will
'Tis God-like to have power but not to kill.

ANT. : This is his Lute : let him have it.
PET. : I grant you ; but who strikes it ?
ANT. : An admirable voice too, hark ye.
PET. : *Anthony*,
Art sure we are at home ?
ANT. : Without all doubt, *Peter*.
PET. : Then this must be the Devil.

ANT. : Let it be, [*Sing again.*
Good Devil sing again : O dainty Devil !
Peter believe it, a most delicate Devil,
The sweetest Devil—

Enter FREDERICK, *and Don* JOHN.

FRED. : If ye could leave peeping.
JOHN : I cannot by no means.
FRED. : Then come in softly,
And as ye love your faith, presume no further
Than ye have promised.
JOHN : *Basta.*
FRED. : What make you up so early Sir ?
JOHN : You Sir in your contemplations.
PET. : O pray ye peace Sir.
FRED. : Why peace Sir ?
PET. : Do you hear ?
JOHN : 'Tis your Lute.
FRED. : Pray ye speak softly,
She's playing on't.
ANT. : The house is haunted Sir,
For this we have heard this half year.
FRED. : Ye saw nothing ?
ANT. : Not I.
PET. Nor I Sir.
FRED. : Get us our breakfast then,
And make no words on't ; we'll undertake this spirit,
If it be one.
ANT. : This is no Devil *Peter.* [*Sing.*
Mum, there be Bats abroad [*Exeunt Servants.*
FRED. : Stay, now she sings.
JOHN : An Angels voice I'le swear.
FRED. : Why didst thou shrug so ?
Either allay this heat ; or as I live
I will not trust ye.
JOHN : Pass : I warrant ye. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CONSTANTIA.

CON. : To curse those stars, that men say govern us,
To rail at fortune, fall out with my Fate,
And tax the general world, will help me nothing :
Alas, I am the same still, neither are they
Subject to helps, or hurts : Our own desires
Are our own fates, our own stars, all our fortunes,
Which as we sway 'em, so abuse, or bless us.

Enter FREDERICK, *and Don* JOHN, *peeping.*

FRED. : Peace to your meditations.
JOHN : Pox upon ye.
Stand out o'th' light.
CONST. : I crave your mercy Sir,
My minde o're-charg'd with care made me unmannerly.
FRED. : Pray ye set that mind at rest, all shall be perfect.

JOHN : I like the body rare ; a handsom body,
A wondrous handsom body : would she would turn :
See, and that spightful puppy be not got
Between me and my light again.
FRED. : 'Tis done,
As all that you command shall be : the Gentleman
Is safely off all danger.
JOHN : *O de dios.*
CONST. : How shall I thank ye Sir ? how satisfie ?
FR. : Speak softly, gentle Lady, all's rewarded,
Now does he melt like Marmalad.
JOHN : Nay, 'tis certain,
Thou art the sweetest woman I e're look'd on :
I hope thou art not honest.
FRED. : None disturb'd ye ?
CONST. : Not any Sir, nor any sound came near me, I thank your care.
FRED. : 'Tis well.
JOHN : I would fain pray now,
But the Devil and that flesh there, o' the world,
What are we made to suffer ?
FRED. : He'll enter ;
Pull in your head and be hang'd.
JOHN : Hark ye *Frederick*,
I have brought ye home your Pack-saddle.
FRED. : Pox upon ye.
CON. : Nay let him enter : fie my Lord the Duke,
Stand peeping at your friends.
FRED. : Ye are cozen'd Lady,
Here is no Duke.
CONST. : I know him full well Signior.
JOHN : Hold thee there wench.
FRED. : This mad-brain'd fool will spoil all.
CONST. : I do beseech your grace come in.
JOHN : My Grace,
There was a word of comfort.
FRED. : Shall he enter ?
Who e're he be ?
JOHN : Well follow'd *Frederick*.
CONST. : With all my heart.
FRED. : Come in then.

Enter Don JOHN.

JOHN : 'Bless ye Lady.
FR. : Nay start not, though he be a stranger to ye,
He's of a noble strain, my kinsman, Lady,
My Countryman, and fellow Traveller,
One bed contains us ever, one purse feeds us,
And one faith free between us ; do not fear him,
He's truly honest.
JOHN : That's a lye.
FRED. : And trusty :
Beyond your wishes : valiant to defend,
And modest to converse with, as your blushes.

Jo. : Now may I hang my self ; this commendation
Has broke the neck of all my hopes : for now
Must I cry, no forsooth, and I forsooth, and surely,
And truly as I live, and as I am honest.
Has done these things for 'nonce too ; for he knows
Like a most envious Rascal as he is,
I am not honest, nor desire to be,
Especially this way : h'as watch'd his time,
But I shall quit him.

CONST. : Sir, I credit ye.

FRED. : Go kiss her *John*.

JOHN : Plague o' your commendations.

CONST. : Sir, I shall now desire to be a trouble.

JOHN : Never to me, sweet Lady : Thus I seal
My faith, and all my service.

CONST. : One word Signior.

JOHN : Now 'tis impossible I should be honest,
She kisses with a conjuration
Would make the Devil dance : what points she at ?
My leg I warrant, or my well knit body,
Sit fast *Don Frederick*.

FRED. : 'Twas given him by that Gentleman
You took such care of ; his own being lost i'th' scuffle.

CON. : With much joy may he wear it : 'tis a right one,
I can assure ye Gentleman, and right happy
May you be in all fights for that fair service.

FRED. : Why do ye blush ?

CONST. : 'T had almost cozen'd me,
For not to lye, when I saw that, I look'd for
Another Master of it : but 'tis well. [*Knock within.*

FRED. : Who's there ?

Enter ANTHONY.

Stand ye a little close : Come in Sir, [*Exit* CONST.
Now what's the news with you ?

ANTH. : There is a Gentleman without,
Would speak with *Don John*.

JOHN : Who Sir ?

ANT. : I do not know Sir, but he shews a man
Of no mean reckoning.

FRED. : Let him shew his name,
And then return a little wiser.

ANT : Well Sir. [*Exit* ANTHONY.

FRED. : How do you like her *John* ?

JOHN : As well as you *Frederick*,
For all I am honest : you shall find it so too.

FRED. : Art thou not honest ?

JOHN : Art thou an Ass ?
And modest as her blushes ? What block-head
Would e're have popt out such a dry Apologie,
For his dear friend ? and to a Gentlewoman,
A woman of her youth, and delicacy.
They are arguments to draw them to abhor us.

An honest moral man ? 'tis for a Constable :
A handsome man, a wholesome man, a tough man,
A liberal man, a likely man, a man
Made up like *Hercules*, unslak'd with service :
The same to night, to morrow night, the next night,
And so to perpetuitie of pleasures,
These had been things to hearken to, things catching :
But you have such a spic'd consideration,
Such qualms upon your worships conscience,
Such chil-blains in your bloud, that all things pinch ye,
Which nature, and the liberal world makes custom,
And nothing but fair honour, O sweet honor,
Hang up your Eunuch honour : That I was trusty,
And valiant, were things well put in ; but modest !
A modest Gentleman ! O wit where wast thou ?

FRED. : I am sorrie *John*.

JOHN : My Ladies Gentlewoman
Would laugh me to a S[c]hool-boy, make me blush
With playing with my Codpiece point : fie on thee,
A man of thy discretion ?

FRED : It shall be mended :
And henceforth ye shall have your due.

Enter ANTHONY.

JOHN : I look for't : How now, who is't ?

ANT. : A Gentleman of this Town
And calls himself *Petrucchio*.

Enter CONSTANTIA.

JOHN : I'le attend him.

CONST. : How did he call himself ?

FRE. : *Petrucchio*,
Does it concern you ought ?

CONST. : O Gentlemen,
The hour of my destruction is come on me,
I am discover'd, lost, left to my ruine :
As ever ye had pity—

JOHN : Do not fear,
Let the great devil come, he shall come through me.
Lost here, and we about ye ?

FRED. : Fall before us ?

CONST. : O my unfortunate estate, all angers
Compar'd to his, to his—

FRED. : Let his, and all mens,
Whilst we have power and life—stand up for heaven sake

CON. : I have offended heaven too ; yet heaven knows—

JOHN : We are all evil :
Yet Heaven forbid we should have our deserts.
What is he ?

CON. : Too too near to my offence Sir ;
O he will cut me piece-meal.

FRED. : 'Tis no Treason ?

JOHN : Let it be what it will, if he cut here,
I'le find him cut-work.

FRED. : He must buy you dear,
With more than common lives.
JOHN : Fear not, nor weep not :
By heaven I'le fire the Town before ye perish,
And then, the more the merrier, we'l jog with ye.
FRED. : Come in and dry your eyes.
JOHN : Pray no more weeping :
Spoil a sweet face for nothing ? my return
Shall end all this I warrant you.
CONST. : Heaven grant it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Enter PETRUCCHIO, *with a Letter.*

PETR. : This man should be of special rank :
For these commends carry no common way,
No slight worth with 'em :
He shall be he.

Enter Don JOHN.

JOHN : 'Save ye Sir : I am sorrie
My business was so unmannerly, to make ye
Wait thus long here.
PETR. : Occasions must be serv'd Sir :
But is your name *Don John* ?
JOHN : It is Sir.
PETR. : Then,
First, for your own brave sake I must embrace ye :
Next, from the credit of your noble friend
Hernando de Alvara, make ye mine :
Who lays his charge upon me in this Letter
To look ye out, and for the goodness in ye,
Whilst your occasions make ye resident
In this place, to supply ye, love and honour ye ;
Which had I know[n] sooner—
JOHN : Noble Sir,
You'l make my thanks too poor : I wear a sword, Sir,
And have a service to be still dispos'd of,
As you shall please command it.
PETR. : Gentle Sir,
That manly courtesie is half my business :
And to be short, to make ye know I honour ye,
And in all points believe your worth like Oracle,
And how above my friends, which are not few
And those not slack, I estimate your vertues,
Make your self understand, This day *Petrucchio*,
A man that may command the strength of this place,
Hazard the boldest spirits, hath made choice
Only of you, and in a noble office.
JOHN : Forward, I am free to entertain it.
PETR. : Thus then :
I do beseech ye mark me.
JOHN : I shall do it.

PETR. : *Ferrara's* Duke, would I might call him worthie,
But that he has raz'd out from his family,
As he has mine with Infamie, This man,
Rather this powerfull Monster, we being left
But two of all our house, to stock our memories,
My Sister, and my self ; with arts and witchcrafts,
Vows, and such oaths heaven has no mercy for,
Drew to dishonour this weak maid, by stealths,
And secret passages I knew not of,
Oft he obtain'd his wishes, oft abus'd her :
I am asham'd to say the rest : This purchas'd,
And his hot bloud allay'd, as friends forsake us
At a miles end upon our way, he left her,
And all our name to ruine.

JOHN : This was foul Play,
And ought to be rewarded so.

PETR. : I hope so ;
He scap'd me yester-night : which if he dare
Again adventure for, Heaven pardon him,
I shall with all my heart.

JOHN : For me, brave Signior,
What do ye intend ?

PETR. : Only, fair Sir, this trust,
Which from the commendations of this Letter,
I dare presume well plac'd, nobly to bear him
By word of mouth a single challenge from me,
That man to man, if he have honour in him,
We may decide all difference.

JOHN : Fair and noble,
And I will do it home : When shall I visite ye ?

PETR. : Please you this after-noon, I will ride with you :
For at a Castle six miles hence, we are sure
To find him.

JOHN : I'le be ready.

PETR. : To attend ye,
My man shall wait : with all my love. [*Ex.* PETR.

JOHN : My service shall not fail ye.

Enter FREDERICK.

FRED. : How now ?

JOHN : All's well : who dost thou think this wench is ?
Ghess, and thou canst ?

FRED. : I cannot.

JOHN : Be it known then,
To all men by these presents, this is she,
She, she, and only she, our curious coxcombs
Were errant two moneths after.

FRED. : Who, *Constantia* ?
Thou talk'st of Cocks and Bulls.

JOHN : I talk of wenches,
Of cocks and Hens, *Don Frederick* ; this is the Pullet,
We two went proud after.

FRED. : It cannot be.

JOHN : It shall be ;
Sister to *Don Petrucchio* : I know all man.
FRED. : Now I believe.
JOHN : Go to, there has been stirring,
Fumbling with Linnen *Frederick*.
FRED. : 'Tis impossible,
You know her fame was pure as fire.
JOHN : That pure fire
Has melted out her maiden-head : she is crackt :
We have all that hope of our side, boy.
FRED. : Thou tell'st me,
To my imagination, things incredible :
I see no loose thought in her.
JOHN : That's all one,
She is loose i'th' hilts by heaven : but the world must know
A fair way, upon vow of marriage.
FRED. : There may be such a slip.
JOHN : And will be, *Frederick*,
Whil'st the old game's a foot : I fear the boy
Will prove hers too I took up.
FRED. : Good circumstance.
May cure all this yet.
JOHN : There thou hitst it, *Frederick* :
Come, let's walk in and comfort her : her being here
Is nothing yet suspected : anon I'le tell thee
Wherefore her Brother came, who by this light
Is a brave noble fellow, and what honour
H'as done to me a stranger : there be Irons
Heating for some, will hiss into their heart blouds,
E're all be ended ; so much for this time.
FRED. : Well Sir. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I

Enter LAND-LADY, *and* PETER.

LAND. : Come, ye do know.
PET. : I do not by this hand Mistris.
But I suspect.
LAND. : What ?
PETER : That if egges continue
At this price, women will ne're be sav'd
By their good works.
LAND. : I will know.
PETER : Ye shall, any thing
Lyes in my power : The Duke of *Loraine* now
Is seven thousand strong : I heard it of a fish-wife,
A woman of fine knowledge.
LAND. : Sirrah, Sirrah.
PET. : The Popes Bulls are broke loose too, and 'tis suspected
They shall be baited in *England*.
LAND. : Very well Sir.
PETER : No, 'tis not so well neither.

LAND. : But I say to ye,
Who is it keeps your Master company ?
PETER : I say to you, *Don John.*
LAND. : I say what woman ?
PETER : I say so too.
LAND. : I say again, I will know.
PETER : I say 'tis fit ye should.
LAND. : And I tell thee
He has a woman here.
PETER : And I tell thee
'Tis then the better for him.
LAND. : You are no Bawd now ?
PETER : Would I were able to be call'd unto it :
A worshipfull vocation for my elders ;
For as I understand it is a place
Fitting my betters far.
LAND. : Was ever Gentlewoman
So frumpt off with a fool ? well sawcy Sirrah,
I will know who it is, and for what purpose ;
I pay the rent, and I will know how my house
Comes by these Inflammations : if this geer hold,
Best hang a sign-post up, to tell the Signiors,
Here ye may have lewdness at Liverie.

Enter FREDERICK.

PETER : 'Twould be a great ease to your age.
FRED. : How now ?
Why what's the matter Land-lady ?
LAND. : What's the matter ?
Ye use me decently among ye Gentlemen.
FRED. : Who has abus'd her, you Sir ?
LAND. : 'Ods my witness
I will not be thus treated, that I will not.
PETER : I gave her no ill language.
LAND. : Thou lyest lewdly,
Thou tookst me up at every word I spoke,
As I had been a Mawkin, a flurt Gillian ;
And thou thinkst, because thou canst write and read,
Our noses must be under thee.
FRED. : Dare you Sirrah ?
PET. : Let but the truth be known, Sir, I beseech ye,
She raves of wenches, and I know not what Sir.
LAN. : Go to, thou know'st too well, thou wicked varlet,
Thou instrument of evil.
PETER : As I live Sir,
She is ever thus till dinner.
FRED. : Get ye in,
I'le answer you anon Sir.
PETER : By this hand
I'le break your Posset pan. [*Exit.*
LAND. : Then by this hood
I'le lock the meat up.
FRED. : Now your grief, what is't ?
For I can ghesse—

LAND. : Ye may with shame enough,
If there were shame amongst ye ; nothing thought on,
But how ye may abuse my house ? not satisfi'd
With bringing home your Bastards to undoe me,
But you must drill your whores here too ? my patience
(Because I bear, and bear, and carry all,
And as they say am willing to groan under)
Must be your make-sport now.
FRED. : No more of these words,
Nor no more murmurings Lady : for you know
That I know something. I did suspect your anger,
But turn it presently and handsomely,
And bear your self discreetly to this woman,
For such an one there is indeed.
LAND. : 'Tis well son.
FRE. : Leaving your devils Matins, and your melancholies,
Or we shall leave our lodgings.
LAND. : You have much need
To use these vagrant ways, and to much profit :
Ye had that might content
(At home within your selves too) right good Gentlemen,
Wholsome, and ye said handsom : But you gallants,
Beast that I was to believe ye—
FRED. : Leave your suspicion :
For as I live there's no such thing.
LAND. : Mine honour ;
And 'twere not for mine honour.
FRED. : Come, your honour,
Your house, and you too, if you dare believe me,
Are well enough : sleek up your self, leave crying,
For I must have ye entertain this Lady
With all civility, she well deserves it,
Together with all secresie : I dare trust ye,
For I have found ye faithfull : when you know her,
You will find your own fault : no more words, but do it.
LAND. : You know you may command me.

Enter Don JOHN.

JOHN : Worshipful Lady,
How does thy velvet Scabbard ? by this hand
Thou lookst most amiably, now could I willingly,
And 'twere not for abusing thy *Geneva* print there,
Venture my Body with thee.
LAND. : You'll leave this Roguery
When you come to my years.
JOHN : By this light
Thou art not above fifteen yet, a meer Girl,
Thou hast not half thy teeth : come—
FRED. : Prithee *John*
Let her alone, she has been vex'd already
She'll grow stark mad, man.
JOHN : I would see her mad,
An old mad woman—
FRED. : Prithee be patient.

JOHN : Is like a Millers Mare, troubled with tooth-ach.
She'll make the rarest faces.
FRED. : Go, and do it,
And do not mind this fellow.
LAND. : Well, *Don John*,
There will be times again ; when O good Mother,
What's good for a Carnosity in the Bladder ?
O the green water, Mother.
JOHN : Doting take ye ;
Do ye remember that ?
FRED. : She has paid ye now, Sir.
LAND. : Clary, sweet mother, clary.
FRED. : Are ye satisfied ?
LAND. : I'll never whore again, never give petticoats
And Wastcoats at five pound apiece : good mother,
Quickly mother ; now mock on Son.
JOHN : A Devil grind your old Chaps. [*Exit* LANDLADY.
FRED. : By this hand, wench,
I'll give thee a new hood for this.
Has she met with your Lordship ?
JOHN : Touch-wood take her.

Enter A[N]THONY.

She's a rare ghostly Mother.
ANT. : Below attends ye
The Gentlemans man, Sir, that was with you.
JOHN : Well, Sir ;
My time is come then ; yet if my project hold,
You shall not stay behind ; I'll rather trust

Enter CONSTANTIA.

A Cat with sweet milk, *Frederick* ; by her face,
I feel her fears are working.
CONST. : Is there no way,
I do beseech ye think yet, to divert
This certain danger ?
FRED. : 'Tis impossible ;
Their Honours are engag'd.
CONST. : Then there must be murther,
Which, Gentlemen, I shall no sooner hear of,
Than make one in't : you may if you please, Sir,
Make all go less yet.
JOHN : Lady, were't mine own Cause,
I could dispense ; but loaden with my friends trust,
I must go on ; though general massacres
As much I fear—
CONST. : Do ye hear, Sir ; for Heavens pity
Let me request one love of you.
FRED. : Yes, any thing.
CONST. : This Gentleman I find too resolute,
Too hot and fiery for the Cause ; as ever
You did a vertuous deed, for honours sake
Go with him, and allay him ; your fair temper
And noble disposition, like wish'd showrs,

May quench those eating fires, that would spoil all else.
I see in him destruction.
FRED. : I will do it ;
And 'tis a wise consideration,
To me a bounteous favour, hark ye, *John* ;
I will go with ye.
JOHN : No.
FRED. : Indeed I will,
Ye go upon a hazard ; no denial,
For as I live, I'll go.
JOHN : Then make ye ready,
For I am straight o' horse-back.
FRED. : My Sword on,
I am as ready as you ; what my best labour,
With all the art I have can work upon 'em,
Be sure of, and expect fair end ; the old Gentlewoman
Shall wait upon you ; she is both grave and private,
And ye may trust her in all points.
CONST. : You are noble ;
And so I kiss your hand.
JOHN : That seal for me too,
And I hope happy issue, Lady.
CONST. : All Heavens Care upon ye, and my Prayers.
JOHN : So,
Now my mind's at rest.
FRED. : Away, 'tis late, *John*. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter ANTONIO, *a* SURGEON, *and* 2 GENTLEMEN.

1 GENT. : Come, Sir, be hearty, all the worst is past.
ANT. : Give me some Wine.
SUR. : 'Tis death, Sir.
ANT. : 'Tis a Horse, Sir.
To be drest to the tune of Ale only !
Nothing but sawces to my sores !
2 GENT. : Fie, *Antonio*,
You must be govern'd.
ANT. : H'as given me a damn'd Clyster,
Only of sand and snow water, Gentlemen,
Has almost scour'd my guts out.
SUR. : I have giv'n you that, Sir,
Is fittest for your state.
ANT. : And here he feeds me
With rotten ends of Rooks, and drown'd Chickens,
Stew'd Pericraniums, and Pia-maters ;
And when I go to bed (by Heaven 'tis true Gentlemen)
He rolls me up in Lints, with Labels at 'em,
That I am just the man i'th' Almanack,
In Head and Face, is *Aries* place.
SUR. : Will't please ye
To let your friends see you open'd ?
ANT. : Will't please you, Sir,
To let me have a wench ? I feel my Body
Open enough for that yet.

SUR. : How, a Wench ?
ANT. : Why look ye, Gentlemen ; thus I am us'd still,
I can get nothing that I want.
1 GENT. : Leave these things,
And let him open ye.
ANT. : D'ye hear, Surgeon ?
Send for the Musick, let me have some pleasure
To entertain my friends, besides your Sallads,
Your green salves, and your searches, and some Wine too,
That I may only smell to it ; or by this light
I'll dye upon thy hand, and spoil thy custome.
1 GENT. : Let him have Musick.

Enter ROWL, *with Wine.*

SUR. : 'Tis in the house, and ready,
If he will ask no more but Wine— [*Musick.*
2 GENT. : He shall not drink it.
SUR. : Will these things please ye ?
ANT. : Yes, and let 'em sing
John Dorrie.
2 GENT. : 'Tis too long.
ANT. : I'll have *John Dorrie,*
For to that warlike tune I will be open'd :
Give me some drink, have ye stopt the leaks well, Surgeon,
All will run out else ?
SURG. : Fear not.
ANT. : Sit down, Gentlemen :
And now advance your Plaisters. [*Song of* John Dorrie.
Give 'em ten shillings, friends ; how do ye find me ?
What symptoms do you see now ?
SURG. : None, Sir, dangerous ;
But if you will be rul'd—
ANT. : What time ?
SURG. : I can cure you
In forty days, if you will not transgress me.
ANT. : I have a Dog shall lick me whole in twenty ;
In how long canst thou kill me ?
SURG. : Presently.
ANT. : Do it, there's more delight in't.
1 GENT. : You must have patience.
ANT. : Man, I must have business ; this foolish fellow
Hinders himself ; I have a dozen Rascals
To hurt within these five days ; good man-mender,
Stop me with some Parsley, like stuft Beef,
And let me walk abroad.
SURG. : Ye shall walk shortly.
ANT. : For I must find *Petrucchio.*
2 GENT. : Time enough.
1 GENT. : Come, lead him in, and let him sleep : within these three days
We'll beg ye leave to play.
2 GENT. : And then how things fall,
We'll certainly inform ye.

ANT. : But Surgeon, promise me
I shall drink Wine then too.
SURG. : A little temper'd.
ANT. : Nay, I'll no tempering, Surgeon.
SURG. : Well, as't please ye,
So ye exceed not.
ANT. : Farewell : and if ye find
The mad Slave that thus slash'd me, commend me to him,
And bid him keep his Skin close.
1 GENT. : Take your rest, Sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Enter CONSTANTIA, *and* LAND-LADY.

CONST. : I have told ye all I can, and more than yet
Those Gentlemen know of me ; ever trusting
Your Counsel and Concealment ; for to me
You seem a worthy Woman ; one of those
Are seldome found in our Sex, wise and vertuous,
Direct me I beseech ye.
LAND. : Ye say well, Lady,
And hold ye to that point, for in these businesses
A Womans Counsel that conceives the matter,
(Do ye mark me ? that conceives the matter, Lady)
Is worth ten mens engagements : She knows something,
And out of that can work like Wax ; when men
Are giddy-headed, either out of Wine,
Or a more Drunkenness, vain Ostentation,
Discovering all ; there is no more keep in 'em
Than hold upon an Eeles tail ; Nay, 'tis held fashion
To defame now all they can.
CONST. : I, but these Gentlemen—
LAND. : Do not you trust to that ; these Gentlemen
Are as all Gentlemen of the same Barrel ;
I, and the self same pickle too. Be it granted.
They have us'd ye with respect and fair behaviour,
Ere since ye came, do you know what must follow ?
They are Spaniards, Lady, Gennets of high mettle,
Things that will thrash the Devil, or his Dam,
Let 'em appear but cloven.
CONST. : Now Heaven bless me.
LAND. : Mad Colts will court the wind ; I know 'em, Lady,
To the least hair they have ; and I tell you,
Old as I am, let but the pint pot bless 'em,
They'll offer to my years—
CONST. : How ?
LAND. : Such rude gambols—
CONST. : To you ?
LAND. : I, and so handle me, that oft I am forc'd
To fight of all four for my safety ; there's the younger,
Don John, the arrantest *Jack* in all this City ;
The other, Time has blasted, yet he will stoop,
If not o'rflown, and freely on the quarry ;
Has been a Dragon in his days. But *Tarmont*,

Don Jenkin is the Devil himself, the dog-days,
The most incomprehensible Whore-master,
Twenty a night is nothing ; Beggars, Broom-women,
And those so miserable, they look like famine,
Are all sweet Ladies in his drink.

CONST. : He's a handsome Gentleman ;
Pity he should be master of such follies.

LAND. : He's ne'er without a noise of Sirynges
In's Pocket, those proclaim him ; birding Pills,
Waters to cool his Conscience, in small Viols :
With thousand such sufficient emblems ; the truth is,
Whose Chastity he chops upon he cares not,
He flies at all ; Bastards upon my conscience,
He has now in making, multitudes ; the last night
He brought home one ; I pity her that bore it,
But we are all weak Vessels, some rich Woman
(For wise I dare not call her) was the mother,
For it was hung with Jewels ; the bearing Cloath
No less than Crimson Velvet.

CONST. : How ?

LAND. : 'Tis true, Lady.

CONST. : Was it a Boy too ?

LAND. : A brave Boy ; deliberation
And judgment shew'd in's getting, as I'll say for him.
He's as well paced for that sport—

CONST. : May I see it ?
For there is a neighbour of mine, a Gentlewoman,
Has had a late mischance, which willingly
I would know further of ; now if you please
To be so courteous to me.

LAND. : Ye shall see it :
But what do ye think of these men now ye now 'em,
And of the cause I told ye of ? Be wise,
Ye may repent too late else ; I but tell you
For your own good, and as you will find it, Lady.

CONST. : I am advis'd.

LAND. : No more words then ; do that,
And instantly, I told ye of, be ready ;
Don John, I'll fit you for your frumps.

CONST. : I shall be :
But shall I see this Child ?

LAND. : Within this half hour,
Let's in, and there think better ; she that's wise,
Leaps at occasion first ; the rest pay for it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

Enter PETRUCCHIO, *Don* JOHN, *and* FREDERICK.

JOHN : Sir, he is worth your knowledg, and a Gentleman
If I that so much love him, may commend him,
Of free and vertuous parts ; and one, if foul play
Should fall upon us, for which fear I brought him,
Will not flye back for phillips.

PET. : Ye much honour me,
And once more I pronounce ye both mine.
FRED. : Stay, what Troop
Is that below i' th' Valley there?
JOHN : Hawking I take it.
PET. : They are so ; 'tis the Duke, 'tis even he, Gentlemen,
Sirrah, draw back the Horses till we call ye,
I know him by his Company.
FRED. : I think too
He bends up this way.
PET. : So he does.
JOHN : Stand you still
Within that covert till I call : you, *Frederick*.
By no means be not seen, unless they offer
To bring on odds upon us ; he comes forward,
Here will I wait him fairly : to your Cabins.
PET. : I need no more instruct ye?
JOHN : Fear me not,
I'le give it him, and boldly. [*Ex.* PET. *and* FRED.

Enter DUKE *and his faction.*

DUKE : Feed the Hawks up,
We'll flie no more to day, O my blest fortune!
Have I so fairly met the man?
JOHN : Ye have, Sir,
And him you know by this.
DUKE : Sir all the honour,
And love—
JOHN : I do beseech your Grace stay there,
(For I know you too now) that love and honour
I come not to receive ; nor can you give it,
Till ye appear fair to the world ; I must beseech ye
Dismiss your train a little.
DUKE : Walk aside,
And out of hearing I command ye : Now, Sir.
JOHN : Last time we met, I was a friend.
DUKE : And Nobly,
You did a friends office : let your business
Be what it may, you must be still—
JOHN : Your pardon,
Never a friend to him, cannot be friend
To his own honour.
DUKE : In what have I transgress'd it?
Ye make a bold breach at the first, Sir.
JOHN : Bolder,
You made that breach that let in infamy,
And ruine, to surprise a noble stock.
DUKE : Be plain, Sir.
JOHN : I will, and short ;
Ye have wrong'd a Gentleman,
Little behind your self, beyond all justice,
Beyond mediation of all friends.
DUKE : The man, and manner of wrong?

JOHN : *Petrucchio*,
The wrong, ye have Whor'd his Sister.
DUKE : What's his will in't ?
JOHN : His will is to oppose you like a Gentleman,
And single, to decide all.
DUKE : Now stay you, Sir,
And hear me with the like belief : this Gentleman,
His Sister that you nam'd, 'tis true I have long lov'd,
Nor was that love lascivious, as he makes it ;
As true, I have enjoy'd her : no less truth,
I have a Child by her : but that she, or he,
Or any of that family are tainted,
Suffer disgrace, or ruin, by my pleasures,
I wear a Sword to satisfie the world no,
And him in this cause when he please ; for know, Sir,
She is my Wife, contracted before Heaven,
(Witness I owe more tye to, than her Brother)
Nor will I flye from that name, which long since
Had had the Churches approbation,
But for his jealous danger.
JOHN : Sir, your pardon,
And all that was my anger, now my service.
DUK. : Fair Sir, I knew I should convert ye ; had we
But that rough man here now too—
JOHN : And ye shall, Sir,
Whoa, hoa, hoo.
DUKE : I hope ye have laid no Ambush ?

Enter PETRUCCHIO.

JOHN : Only friends.
DUKE : My noble Brother welcome :
Come put your anger off, we'll no fighting,
Unless you will maintain I am unworthy
To bear that name.
PET. : Do you speak this heartily ?
DUKE : Upon my soul, and truly ; the first Priest
Shall put you out of these doubts.
PET. : Now I love ye ;
And I beseech you pardon my suspicions,
You are now more than a Brother, a brave friend too.
JOHN : The good man's over-joy'd.

Enter FREDERICK.

FRED. : How, how, how goes it ?
JOHN : Why, the man has his Mare again, and all's well, *Frederick*,
The Duke professes freely he's her Husband.
FRED. : 'Tis a good hearing.
JOHN : Yes, for modest Gentlemen.
I must present ye : may it please your Grace,
To number this brave Gentleman, my friend,
And noble kinsman, amongst those your servants.
DUKE : O my brave friend ! you shower your bounties on me
Amongst my best thoughts, Signior, in which number

You being worthily dispos'd already,
May place your friend to honour me.
FRED. : My love, Sir,
And where your Grace dares trust me, all my service.
PET. : Why ! this is wondrous happy : But now Brother,
Now comes the bitter to our sweet : *Constantia.*
DUKE : Why, what of her ?
PET. : Nor what, nor where, do I know !
Wing'd with her fears last night, beyond my knowledge,
She quit my house, but whither—
FRED. : Let not that—
DUKE : No more good Sir, I have heard too much.
PET. : Nay sink not,
She cannot be so lost.
JOHN : Nor shall not, Gentlemen ;
Be free again, the Lady's found ; that smile, Sir,
Shews ye distrust your Servant.
DUKE : I do beseech ye.
JOHN : Ye shall believe me : by my soul she is safe.
DUKE : Heaven knows, I would believe, Sir.
FRED. : Ye may safely.
JOHN : And under noble usage : this fair Gentleman
Met her in all her doubts last night, and to his Guard,
(Her fears being strong upon her) she gave her person,
Who waited on her to our lodging ; where all respect,
Civil and honest service now attend her.
PET. : Ye may believe now.
DUKE : Yes, I do, and strongly :
Well my good friends, or rather my good Angels,
For ye have both preserv'd me ; when these vertues
Dye in your friends remembrance—
JOHN : Good your Grace,
Lose no more time in complement, 'tis too precious,
I know it by my self there can be no Hell
To his that hangs upon his hopes ; especially
In way of lustly pleasures.
PET. : He has hit it.
FRED. : To horse again then, for this night I'le crown
With all the joyes ye wish for.
PET. : Happy Gentlemen. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FRANCISCO.

FRAN. : This is the maddest mischief : never fool
Was so fob'd off, as I am ; made ridiculous,
And to my self mine own Ass : trust a Woman ?
I'le trust the Devil first ; for he dare be
Better than's word sometime : what faith have I broke ?
In what observance fail'd ? Let me consider,

Enter Don JOHN, *and* FREDERICK.

For this is monstrous usage.
FRED. : Let them talk,
We'll ride on fair and softly.
FRAN. : Well, *Constantia.*

FRED. : *Constantia*, what's this fellow ? stay by all means.
FRAN. : Ye have spun your self a fair thread now.
FRED. : Stand still, *John*.
FRAN. : What cause had you to fly ? what fear possest ye
Were you not safely lodg'd from all suspicion ?
Us'd with all gentle means ? did any know
How ye came thither, or what your sin was.
FRED. : *John*,
I smell some juggling, *John*.
JOHN : Yes, *Frederick*, I fear it will be found so.
FRAN. : So strangely,
Without the counsel of your friends ; so desperately
To put all dangers on ye ?
FRED. : 'Tis she.
FRAN. : So deceitfully,
After a strangers lure !
JOHN : Did ye mark that, *Frederick* ?
FRAN. : To make ye appear more monster ; and the Law
More cruel to reward ye ? to leave all,
All that should be your safegard, to seek evils ?
Was this your wisdom ? this your promise ? well,
He that incited ye—
FRED. : Mark that too.
JOHN : Yes Sir.
FRAN. : 'Had better have plough'd farther off ; now Lady,
What will your last friend, he that should preserve ye,
And hold your credit up, the brave *Antonio*,
Think of this slip ? he'll to *Petrucchio*,
And call for open justice.
JOHN : 'Tis she, *Frederick*.
FRED. : But what that he is, *John* ?
FRA. : I do not doubt yet
To bolt ye out, for I know certainly
Ye are about the Town still : ha, no more words. [*Exit.*
FRED. Well.
JOHN : Very well.
FRED. : Discreetly.
JOHN : Finely carried.
FRED. : You have no more of these tricks ?
JOHN : Ten to one, Sir,
I shall meet with 'em if ye have.
FRED. : Is this honest ?
JOHN : Was it in you a friends part to deal double ?
I am no Ass *Don Frederick*.
FRED. : And *Don John*,
It shall appear I am no fool ;
Disgrace me to make your self a lecher ?
'Tis boyish, 'tis base.
JOHN : 'Tis false, and most unmanly to upbraid me,
Nor will I be your bolster, Sir.
FRE. : Thou wanton boy, thou hadst better have been Eunuch,
Thou common womans courtesie, than thus
Lascivious, basely to have bent mine honour.
A friend ? I'[l]e make a horse my friend first.

JOHN : Holla, holla,
Ye kick too fast, Sir : what strange brains have you got,
That dare crow out thus bravely ? I better been an Eunuch ?
I privy to this dog trick ? clear your self,
For I know where the wind sits, and most nobly,
Or as I have a life—
FRED. : No more : they're horses. [*A noise within, like horses.*
Nor shew no discontent : to morrow comes ;
Let's quietly away : if she be at home,
Our jealousies are put off.
JOHN : The fellow,

Enter DUKE, PETRUCCHIO.

We have lost him in our spleens, like fools.
DUKE : Come, Gentlemen,
Now set on roundly : suppose ye have all Mistresses,
And mend your pace according.
PETR. : Then have at ye. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I

Enter DUKE, PETRUCCHIO, FREDERICK, *and* JOHN.

PETR. : Now to *Bologna*, my most honoured Brother,
I dare pronounce ye a hearty, and safe welcome,
Our loves shall now way-lay ye ; welcome, Gentlemen.
JOHN : The same to you brave Sir ; *Don Frederick*,
Will ye step in and give the Lady notice
Who comes to honour her ?
PETR. : Bid her be sudden,
We come to see no curious wench : a night-gown
Will serve the turn : here's one that knows her nearer.
FRED. : I'le tell her what ye say, Sir. [*Exit* FRED.
DUKE : My dear brother,
Ye are a merry Gentleman.
PETR. : Now will the sport be,
To observe her alterations ; how like a wildfire
She'll leap into your bosom ; then seeing me,
Her conscience, and her fears creeping upon her,
Dead as a fowl at souse, she'll sink.
DUKE : Fair Brother,
I must intreat you—
PETR. : I conceive your mind, Sir,
I will not chide her : yet ten Duckets, Duke,
She falls upon her knees, ten more she dare not—
DUKE : I must not have her frighted.
PETR. : Well you shall not :

Enter FREDERICK *and* PETER.

But like a Summers evening against heat,
Mark how I'le guild her cheeks!
JOHN : How now ?
FRED. : Ye may, Sir :
Not to abuse your patience, noble friends,

Nor hold ye off with tedious circumstance,
For you must know—
PETR. : What ?
DUKE : Where is she ?
FRED. : Gone, Sir.
DUKE : How ?
PETR. : What did you say, Sir ?
FRED. : Gone, by Heaven removed,
The woman of the house too.
JOHN : Well *Don Frederick.*
FRED. : *Don John*, it is not well, but—
PET. : Gone ?
FRED. : This fellow
Can testifie I lye not.
PETER : Some four hours after
My Master was departed, with this Gentleman,
My fellow and my self being sent on business,
(As we must think) of purpose—
PETR. : Hang these circumstances,
They appear like Owls, to ill ends.
JOHN : Now could I eat
The Devil in his own broth, I am so tortur'd.
Gone ?
PETR. : Gone ?
FRED. : Directly gone, fled, shifted : what would you have me say ?
DUKE : Well, Gentlemen,
Wrong not my good opinion.
FRED. : For your Dukedom
I will not be a Knave, Sir.
JOHN : He that is,
A rot run in his bloud.
PETR. : But hark ye Gentlemen,
Are ye sure ye had her here, did ye not dream this ?
JOHN : Have you your nose, Sir ?
PETR. : Yes, Sir.
JOHN : Then we had her.
PETR. : Since you are so short, believe your having her
Shall suffer more construction.
JOHN : Let it suffer,
But if I be not clear of all dishonour,
Or practice that may taint my reputation,
And ignorant of where this Woman is,
Make me your Cities monster.
DUKE : I believe ye.
JOHN : I could lye with a Witch now, to be reveng'd,
Upon that Rascal did this.
FRED. : Only thus much
I would desire your Grace, for my mind gives me
Before night yet she is yours : stop all opinion,
And let no anger out, till full cause call it,
Then every mans own work's to justifie him,
And this day let us give to search : my man here
Tells me, by chance he saw out of a window
(Which place he has taken notice of) such a face

As our old Landladies, he believes the same too,
And by her hood assures it : Let's first thither,
For she being found, all's ended.
DUKE : Come, for Heavens sake,
And Fortune, and thou be'st not ever turning,
If there be one firm step in all thy reelings,
Now settle it, and save my hopes : away friends. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter ANTONIO *and his* SERVANT.

ANT. : With all my Jewels ?
SER. : All, Sir.
ANT. : And that mony
I left i'th' trunk ?
SER. : The Trunk broke, and that gone too.
ANT. : *Francisco* of the plot ?
SER. : Gone with the wench too.
ANT. : The mighty pox go with 'em : belike they thought
I was no man of this world, and those trifles
Would but disturb my conscience.
SER. : Sure they thought, Sir,
You would not live to persecute 'em.
ANT. : Whore and Fidler,
Why, what a consort have they made ! Hen and Bacon
Well my sweet Mistris, well good Madam mar-tail ?
You that have hung about my neck, and lick't me,
I'le try how handsomely your Ladyship
Can hang upon a Gallows, there's your Master-piece ;
But hark ye Sirrah, no imagination
Of where they should be ?
SER. : None, Sir, yet we have search'd
All places we suspected ; I believe, Sir,
They have taken towards the Ports.
ANT. : Get me a conjurer,
One that can raise a water Devil, I'le port 'em ;
Play at duck and drake with my mony ; take heed Fidler ;
I'le dance ye by this hand, your Fidle-stick
I'le grease of a new fashion, for presuming
To meddle with my degamboys : get me a Conjurer,
Enquire me out a man that lets out Devils :
None but my C. Cliff serve your turn ?
SER. : I know not—
ANT. : In every street, *Tom* fool, any blear-ey'd people
With red heads, and flat noses can perform it ;
Thou shalt know 'em by their half Gowns and no Breeches :
Mount my Mare Fidler ? ha boy ! up at first dash ?
Sit sure, I'le clap a nettle, and a smart one,
Shall make your Filly firk : I will fine Fidler,
I'le put you to your plunge, Boy : Sirrah meet me
Some two hours hence at home ; in the mean time
Find out a conjurer and know his price,
How he will let his Devils by the day out,
I'le have 'em, and they be above ground. [*Ex.* ANT.

SER. : Now bless me,
What a mad man is this ! I must do something
To please his humour : such a man I'le ask for,
And tell him where he is : but to come near him,
Or have any thing to do with his don Devils,
I thank my fear, I dare not, nor I will not. [*Exit.*

SCENE III

Enter DUKE, PETRUCCHIO, FREDERICK, JOHN, PETER, *and* SERVANT *with Bottles.*

FRED. : Whither wilt thou lead us ?
[PET.] : 'Tis hard by, Sir.
And ten to one this wine goes thither.
DUKE : Forward.
PETR. : Are they grown so merry ?
DUKE : 'Tis [most] likely,
She has heard of this good fortune, and determines
To wash her sorrows off.
[PET.] : 'Tis so ; that house, Sir,
Is it : out of that window certainly
I saw my old Mistresses face.
PETR. : They are merry indeed, [*Musick.*
Hark I hear Musick too.
DUKE : Excellent Musick.
JOHN : Would I were ev'n among 'em, and alone now ;
A pallat for the purpose in a corner,
And good rich Wine within me ; what gay sport
Could I make in an hour now !

SONG.

Welcome sweet liberty, and care farewel,
I am mine own,
She is twice damn'd that lives in Hell,
When Heaven is shown.
Budding beauty, blooming years
Were made for pleasure, farewel fears,
For now I am my self, mine own command,
My fortune alwayes in my hand.

FRED. : Hark a voice too ;
Let's not stir yet by any means.
JOHN : Was this her own voice ?
DUKE : Yes, sure.
FRED. : 'Tis a rare one.

Enter BAWD (*above.*)

DU. : The Song confirms her here too : for if ye mark it,
It spake of liberty, and free enjoying
The happy end of pleasure.
[PET.] : Look ye there, Sir,
Do ye know that head ?
FRED. : 'Tis my good Landlady,
I find fear has done all this.

JOHN : She I swear,
And now do I know by the hanging of her Hood,
She is parcel drunk : shall we go in ?
DUKE : Not yet, Sir.
PETR. : No, let 'em take their pleasure.
DUKE : When it is highest, [*Musick.*
We'll step in, and amaze 'em : peace, more Musick.
JOHN : This Musick murders me : what bloud have I now !
FRED. : I should know that face. [*Enter* FRAN. *and Exit.*
JOHN : By this light 'tis he, *Frederick*,
That bred our first suspicions, the same fellow.
FRED. : He that we overtook, and overheard too,
Discoursing of *Constantia*.
JOHN : Still the same ;
Now he slips in.
DUKE : What's that ?
FRED. : She must be here Sir :
This is the very fellow, I told your Grace

Enter FRANCISCO.

We found upon the way ; and what his talk was.
PETR. : Why, sure I know this fellow ; yes, 'tis he,
Francisco, *Antonio's* boy, a rare Musician,
He taught my Sister on the Lute, and is ever
(She loves his voice so well) about her : certain,
Without all doubt she is here : it must be so.
JOHN : Here ? that's no question : what should our hen o'th' game else
Do here without her ? if she be not here
(I am so confident) let your grace believe,
We two are arrant Rascals, and have abus'd ye.
FRED. : I say so too.
JOHN : Why there's the hood again now,
The guard that guides us ; I know the fabrick of it,
And know the old tree of that saddle yet, 'twas made of,
A hunting hood, observe it.
DUKE : Who shall enter ?
PETR. : I'le make one.
JOHN : I, another.
DUKE : But so carry it,
That all her joyes flow not together.
JOHN : If we told her,
Your grace would none of her ?
DUKE : By no means, Signior
'Twould turn her wild, stark, frantick.
JOHN : Or assur'd her—
DUKE : Nothing of that stern nature : this ye may Sir,
That the conditions of our fear yet stand
On nice and dangerous knittings : or that a little
I seem to doubt the child.
JOHN : Would I could draw her
To hate your grace with these things.
PETR. : Come let's enter. [*Ex.* PETR. *and* JOHN.
And now he sees me not. I'le search her soundly.

DUKE : Now luck of all sides. [*Musick.*
FRED. : Doubt it not : more Musick :
Sure she has heard some comfort.
DUKE : Yes, stand still Sir.
FRED. : This is the maddest song.
DUKE : Applyed for certain
To some strange melancholy she is loaden with.
FRED. : Now all the sport begins—hark !
DUKE : They are amongst 'em,
The fears now, and the shakings ! [*Trampling above.*
FRED. : Our old Lady
(Hark how they run) is even now at this instant
Ready to lose her head-piece by *Don John*,
Or creeping through a Cat hole. [PETR. *and* JOHN *within.*
PETR. : Bring 'em down,
And you Sir, follow me.
DUKE : He's angry with 'em,
I must not suffer this.
JOHN, *within* : Bowl down the Bawd there
Old *Erra mater* : you Lady leachery,
For the good will I bear to th' game, most tenderly
Shall be lead out, and lash'd.

Enter PETRUCCHIO, JOHN, WHORE, *and* BAWD, with FRANCISCO.

DUKE : Is this *Constantia* ?
Why Gentlemen ? what do you mean ? is this she ?
WHORE : I am *Constantia* Sir.
DUKE : A whore ye are Sir.
WHORE : 'Tis very true : I am a whore indeed Sir.
PETR. : She will not lye yet, though she steal.
WHORE : A plain whore,
If you please to imploy me.
DUKE : And an impudent—
WHORE : Plain dealing now is impudence.
One, if you will Sir, can shew ye as much sport
In one half hour, and with as much variety,
As a far wiser woman can in half a year :
For there my way lies.
DUKE : Is she not drunk too ?
WHORE : A little guilded o're Sir,
Old sack, old sack boys.
PETR. : This is *saliant*.
JOHN : A brave bold quean.
DUKE : Is this your certainty ?
Do ye know the man ye wrong thus, Gentlemen ?
Is this the woman meant ?
FRED. : No.
DUKE : That your Land-lady ?
JOHN : I know not what to say.
DUKE : Am I a person
To be your sport, Gentlemen ?
JOHN : I do believe now certain
I am a knave ; but how, or when—
DUKE : What are you ?

PETR. : Bawd to this piece of pye meat.
BAWD : A poor Gentlewoman
That lyes in Town, about Law business,
And't like your worships.
PETR. : You shall have Law, believe it.
BAWD : I'le shew your Mastership my case.
PETR. : By no means,
I had rather see a Custard.
BAWD : My dead Husband
Left it even thus Sir.
JOHN : Bless mine eyes from blasting,
I was never so frighted with a case.
BAWD : And so Sir—
PETR. : Enough, put up good velvet head.
DUKE : What are you two now,
By your own free concessions ?
FRED. : What you shall think us,
Though to my self I am certain, and my life
Shall make that good and perfect, or fall with it.
JOHN : We are sure of nothing, *Fred*, that's the truth on't :
I do not think my name's *Don John*, nor dare not
Believe any thing that concerns me, but my debts,
Nor those in way of payment : things are so carried,
What to entreat your grace, or how to tell ye
We are, or we are not, is past my cunning,
But I would fain imagine we are honest,
And o' my conscience, I should fight in't—
DUKE : Thus then,
For we may be all abus'd.
PETR. : 'Tis possible,
For how should this concern them ?
DUKE : Here let's part—
Until to morrow this time : we to our way,
To make this doubt out, and you to your way ;
Pawning our honours then to meet again,
When if she be not found.
FRED. : We stand engaged
To answer any worthy way we are call'd to.
DUKE : We ask no more.
WHORE : Ye have done with us then ?
PETR. : No, Dame.
DUKE : But is her name *Constantia* ?
PETR. : Yes a moveable
Belonging to a friend of mine : come out Fidler,
What say you to this Lady ? be not fearfull.
FRA. : Saving the reverence of my Masters pleasure,
I say she is a whore, and that she has robb'd him,
Hoping his hurts would kill him.
WHORE : Who provok't me ?
Nay Sirrah squeak, I'le see your treble strings
Ty'd up too ; if I hang, I'le spoil your piping,
Your sweet face shall not save ye.

PETR. : Thou damn'd impudence,
And thou dry'd Devil ; where's the officer ?
[PET.] : He's here Sir.

Enter OFFICER.

PETR. : Lodge these safe, till I send for 'em ;
Let none come to 'em, nor no noise be heard
Of where they are, or why : away.
JOHN : By this hand
A handsom whore : Now will I be arrested,
And brought home to this officers : a stout whore,
I love such stirring ware : pox o' this business,
A man must hunt out morsels for another,
And starve himself : a quick-ey'd whore, that's wild-fire,
And makes the bloud dance through the veins like billows.
I will reprieve this whore.
DUKE : Well, good luck with ye.
FRED. : As much attend your grace.
PETR. : To morrow certain—
JOHN : If we out-live this night Sir.
FRED. : Come *Don John*,
We have something now to do.
JOHN : I am sure I would have.
FRED. : If she be not found, we must fight.
JOHN : I am glad on't,
I have not fought a great while.
FRED. : If we dye—
JO. : There's so much mony sav'd in lecherie. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I

Enter DUKE, PETRUCCHIO, *below, and* VECCHIO, *above.*

DUKE : It should be hereabouts.
PETR. : Your grace is right,
This is the house, I know it.
VEC. : Grace ?
DUKE : 'Tis further
By the description we received.
PETR. : Good my Lord the Duke,
Believe me, for I know it certainly,
This is the very house.
VEC. : My Lord the Duke ?
DUKE : Pray Heaven this man prove right now.
PETR. : Believe it, he's a most sufficient Scholar,
And can do rare tricks this way ; for a figure,
Or raising an appearance, whole Christendom
Has not a better ; I have heard strange wonders of him.
DUKE : But can he shew us where she is ?
PETR. : Most certain,
And for what cause too she departed.
DUKE : Knock then,
For I am great with expectation,

Till this man satisfie me : I fear the *Spaniards*,
Yet they appear brave fellows : can he tell us ?
PETR. : With a wet finger, whether they be false.
DUKE : Away then.
PETR. : Who's within here ?

Enter VECCHIO.

VEC. : Your grace may enter.
DUKE : How can he know me ?
PETR. : He knows all.
VEC. : And you Sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter Don JOHN, *and* FREDERICK.

JOHN : What do you call his name ?
FRED. : Why, *Peter Vecchio.*
JOHN : They say he can raise Devils,
Can he make 'em
Tell truth too, when he has rais'd 'em ? for believe it,
These Devils are the lyingst Rascals.
FRED. : He can compel 'em.
JOHN : With what ? can he
Tye squibs in their tails, and fire the truth out ?
Or make 'em eat a bawling Puritan,
Whose sanctified zeal shall rumble like an Earth-quake ?
FRED. : With Spells man.
JOHN : I with spoons as soon, dost thou think
The Devil such an Asse as people make him ?
Such a poor coxcomb ? such a penny foot-post ?
Compel'd with cross and pile to run of errands ?
With *Asteroth*, and *Behemoth*, and *Belfagor* ?
Why should he shake at sounds, that lives in a smiths forge ?
Or if he do—
FRED. : Without all doubt he do's *John.*
JOHN : Why should not Bilbo raise him, or a pair of bullyons,
They go as big as any ? or an unshod Car,
When he goes tumble, tumble o're the stones,
Like *Anacreons* drunken verses, [make us tremble ?]
These make as fell a noise ; me thinks the colick
Well handled and fed with small beer—
FRED. : 'Tis the vertue—
JOHN : The vertue ; nay, and goodness fetch him up once,
H'as lost a friend of me ; the wise old Gentleman
Knows when, and how ; I'le lay this hand to two pence,
Let all the Conjurers in Christendom,
With all their spells, and vertues call upon him,
And I but think upon a wench, and follow it,
He shall be sooner mine than theirs ; where's vertue ?
FRED. : Thou art the most sufficient, (I'le say for thee)
Not to believe a thing—
JOHN : O Sir, slow credit
Is the best child of knowl[e]dge ; I'le go with ye,
And if he can do any thing, I'le think
As you would have me.

FRED. : Let's enquire along,
For certain we are not far off.
JOHN : Nor much nearer. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Enter DUKE, PETRUCCHIO, *and* VECCHIO.

VEC. : You lost her yester-night.
PET. : How think you Sir ?
DUKE : Is your name *Vecchio* ?
VEC. : Yes Sir.
DU. : And you can shew me
These things you promise.
VEC. : Your graces word bound to me,
No hand of Law shall seize me.
DUKE : As I live Sir—
PETR. : And as I live, that can do something too Sir.
VEC. : I take your promises : stay here a little,
Till I prepare some Ceremonies, and I'le satisfie ye.
The Ladies name's *Constantia* ?
PETR. : Yes.
VEC. : I come straight. [*Exit* VEC.
DUKE : Sure he's a learned man.
PETR. : The most now living ;
Did your grace mark when we told all these circumstances,
How ever and anon he bolted from us
To use his studies help ?
DUKE : Now I think rather
To talk with some familiar.
PETR. : Not unlikely,
For sure he has 'em subject.
DUKE : How could he else
Tell when she went, and who went with her ?
PETR. : True.
DU. : Or hit upon mine honour : or assure me
The Lady lov'd me dearly ?

Enter VECCHIO, *in his habiliments.*

PETR. : 'Twas so.
VEC. : Now,
I do beseech your grace sit down, and you Sir ;
Nay pray sit close like Brothers.
PETR. : A rare fellow.
VEC. : And what ye see, stir not at, nor use a word,
Until I ask ye ; for what shall appear
Is but weak apparition and thin air,
Not to be held, nor spoken to. [*Knocking within.*
[JOHN, FREDERICK, *and a* SERVANT *within.*
DUKE : We are counsell'd—
VEC. : What noise is that without there ?
FRED. *within* : We must speak with him.
SERV. *within* : He's busie, Gentlemen.
JOHN *within* : That's all one friend,
We must and will speak with him.

DUKE : Let 'em in, Sir,
We know their tongues and business, 'tis our own,
And in this very cause that we now come for,
They also come to be instructed.
VEC. : Let 'em in then :
Sit down, I know your meaning.

Enter FREDERICK, JOHN, *and* SERVANT.

FRED. : The Duke before us ?
Now we shall sure know something.
VEC. : Not a question,
But make your Eyes your Tongues—
JOHN : This is a strange Jugler,
Neither indent before-hand for his payment,
Nor know the Breadth of the business ; sure his Devil
Comes out of *Lapland*, where they sell men Winds
For dead drink, and old Doublets.
FRED. : Peace, he conjures.
JOHN : Let him, he cannot raise my Devil.
FRED. : Prithee Peace.

VEC. : *Appear, appear,*
And you soft Winds so clear,
That dance upon the leaves, and make them sing,
Gentle Love-lays to the Spring,
Gilding all the Vales below,
With your Verdure as ye blow,
Raise these forms from under ground
With a soft and happy sound. [*Soft Musick.*

JOHN : This is an honest Conjurer, and a pretty Poet ;
I like his words well, there's no bombast in 'em,
But do you think now he can cudgel up the Devil
With this short Staff of Verses ?
FRED. : Peace, the Spirits— [2 *shapes of women passing by.*
JOHN : Nay, and they be no worse—
VEC. : Do ye know these faces ?
DUKE : No.
VEC. : Sit still upon your lives then, and mark want follows ;
Away, away.
JOHN : These Devils do not paint sure ?
Have they no sweeter shapes in Hell ?
FRED. : Hark now, *John*. [CONSTANTIA *passes by.*
JOHN : I, marry, this moves something like, this Devil
Carries some metal in her gate.
VEC. : I find ye,
You would see her face unvail'd ?
DUKE : Yes.
VEC. : Be uncovered.
DUKE : O Heaven !
VEC. : Peace.
PET. : See how she blushes.
JOHN : *Frederick*,
This Devil for my mony ; this is she, Boy,
Why dost thou shake ? I burn.
VEC. : Sit still, and silent.

DUKE : She looks back at me, now she smiles, Sir.
VEC. : Silence.
DUKE : I must rise, or I burst. [*Exit* CONSTANTIA.
VEC. : Ye see what follows—
DUKE : O gentle Sir, this shape agen.
VEC. : I cannot.
'Tis all disso[l]v'd again ; this was the Figure ?
DUKE : The very same, Sir.
No hope once more to see it ?
VEC. : You might have kept it longer, had ye spar'd it,
Now 'tis impossible.
DUKE : No means to find it ?
VEC. : Yes, that there is, sit still a while, there's Wine
To thaw the wonder from your hearts ; drink well, Sir.
[*Exit* VECCHIO.
JOHN : This Conjurer is a right good fellow too,
A Lad of mettle ; two such Devils more
Would make me a Conjurer ; what wine is it ?
FRED. : Hollock.
JOHN : The Devil's in it then ; look how it dances.
Well, if I be—
PET. : We are all before ye,
That's your best comfort, Sir.
JOHN : By th' Mass, brave Wine ;
Nay, and the Devils live in this Hell, I dare venture
Within these two months yet to be delivered
Of a large Legion of 'em.

Enter VECCHIO.

DU. : Here he comes,
Silence of all sides, Gentlemen.
VEC. : Good your Grace,
Observe a stricter temper, and you too, Gallants,
You'll be deluded all else. This merry Devil
The next appears, for such a one you'll find it,
Must be call'd up by a strange incantation,
A Song, and I must sing it : 'pray bear with me,
And pardon my rude Pipe ; for yet, ere parting
Twenty to one I please ye.
DU. : We are arm'd Sir.
PET. : Nor shall you see us more transgress.
FRED. : What think'st thou
Now, *John* ?
JOHN : Why, now do I think, *Frederick*,
(And if I think amiss Heaven pardon me)
This honest Conjurer, with some four or five
Of his good fellow Devils, and my self,
Shall be yet drunk ere midnight.

SONG.

Come away, thou Lady gay,
Hoist ; how she stumbles !
Hark how she mumbles.
Dame GILLIAN. *Answer. I come, I come.*

By old Claret I enlarge thee,
By Canary thus I charge thee,
By Britain, *Mathewglin, and Peeter,*
Appear and answer me in meeter.

Why when?
Why Gill?
Why when?
Answer. You'll tarry till I am ready.

Once again I conjure thee,
By the Pose in thy Nose,
And the Gout in thy Toes;
By thine old dryed Skin,
And the Mummie within;
By thy little, little Ruff,
And thy Hood that's made of Stuff;
By thy Bottle at thy Breech,
And thine old salt Itch;
By the Stakes, and the Stones,
That have worn out thy Bones.

Appear.
Appear.
Appear.
Answer. Oh I am here.

FRED. : Peace, he conjures.
JOHN : Why, this is the Song, *Frederick* ; twenty pound now,
To see but our *Don Gillian.*

Enter LAND-LADY *and the* CHILD.

FRED. : Peace, it appears.
JOHN : I cannot peace ; Devils in French hoods, *Frederick* ?
Satans old Syringes ?
DUKE : What's this ?
VEC. : Peace.
JOHN : She, Boy.
FRED. : What dost thou mean ?
JOHN : She, Boy, I say.
FRED. : Ha ?
JOHN : She Boy,
The very Child too, *Frederick.*
FRED. : She laughs on us.
Aloud, *John*, has the Devil these affections ?
I do believe 'tis she, indeed.
VEC. : Stand still.
JOHN : I will not ;
Who calls *Jeronimo* from his naked Bed ?
Sweet Lady, was it you ? if thou beest the Devil,
First, having crost myself, to keep out wildfire,
Then said some special Prayers to defend me
Against thy most unhallowed Hood, have at thee.
LAND. : Hold, Sir, I am no Devil.
JOHN : That's all one.
LAND. : I am your very Landlady.

JOHN : I defie thee ;
Thus as St. *Dunstan* blew the Devil's Nose
With a pair of tongs, even so, Right Worshipful—
LAND. : Sweet Son, I am old *Gillian*.
DUKE : This is no Spirit.
JOHN : Art thou old *Gillian*, flesh and bone ?
LAND. : I am, Son.
VEC. : Sit still, Sir, now I'll shew you all. | *Ex.* VEG.
JOHN : Where's thy Bottle ?
LAND. : Here, I beseech ye, Son—
JOHN : For I know the Devil
Cannot assume that shape.
FRED. : 'Tis she, *John*, certain—
JOHN : A hogs pox o' your mouldy chaps, what makes you
Tumbling and juggling here ?
LAND. : I am quit now, Seignior,
For all the pranks you plaid, and railings at me,
For to tell true, out of a trick I put
Upon your high behaviours, which was a lie,
But then it serv'd my turn, I drew the Lady
Unto my Kinsman's here, only to torture
Your *Don*-ships for a day or two ; and secure her
Out of all thoughts of danger ; here she comes now.

Enter VECCHIO, *and* CONSTANTIA.

DUKE : May I yet speak ?
VEC. : Yes, and embrace her too,
For one that loves you dearer—
DUKE : O my Sweetest.
PET. : Blush not, I will not chide ye,
CONST. : To add more
Unto the joy I know, I bring ye, see Sir,
The happy fruit of all our Vows !
DUKE : Heavens Blessing
Be round about thee ever.
JOHN : Pray bless me to[o],
For if your Grace be well instructed this way,
You'll find the keeping half the getting.
DUKE : How, Sir ?
JOHN : I'll tell you that anon.
CONST. : 'Tis true, this Gentleman
Has done a charity worthy your favour,
And let him have it, dear Sir.
DUKE : My best Lady
He has, and ever shall have : so must you, Sir,
To whom I am equal bound as to my being.
FRED. : Your Graces humble servant—
DUKE : Why kneel you, Sir ?
VEC. : For pardon for my boldness : yet 'twas harmless,
And all the art I have, Sir ; those your Grace saw,
Which you thought spirits, were my Neighbours Children
Whom I instruct in Grammar here, and Musick ;
Their shapes, the Peoples fond opinions,

Believing I can conjure, and oft repairing
To know of things stoln from 'em, I keep about me,
And always have in readiness, by conjecture
Out of their own confessions, I oft tell 'em
Things that by chance have fallen out so ; which way
(Having the persons here, I knew you sought for)
I wrought upon your Grace ; my end is mirth,
And pleasing, if I can, all parties.

DUKE : I believe it,
For you have pleas'd me truly : so well pleas'd me,
That when I shall forget it—

PET. : Here's old *Antonio*,
I spy'd him at a window, coming mainly
I know about his Whore, the man you light on,
As you discovered unto me ; good your Grace,
Let's stand by all, 'twill be a mirth above all,
To observe his pelting fury.

VEC. : About a wench, Sir ?

PET. : A young whore that has rob'd him.

VEC. : But do you know, Sir,
Where she is ?

PET. : Yes, and will make that perfect—

VEC. : I am instructed well then.

JOHN : If he come
To have a Devil shew'd him, by all means
Let me be he, I can roar rarely.

PET. : Be so,
But take heed to his anger.

VEC. : Slip in quickly,
There you shall find suits of all sorts : when I call
Be ready and come forward. [*Exeunt all but* VECCHIO.
Who's there comes in ?

Enter ANTONIO.

ANT. : Are you the Conjurer ?

VEC. : Sir, I can do a little
That way, if you please to employ me.

ANT. : Presently, shew me a Devil that can tell—

VEC. : Where your wench is.

ANT. : You are i'th' right ; as also where the Fidler
That was consenting to her.

VEC. : Sit ye there, Sir,
Ye shall know presently : can ye pray heartily ?

ANT. : Why, is your Devil so furious ?

VEC. : I must shew ye
A form may chance affright ye.

ANT. : He must fart fire then :
Take you no care for me.

VEC. : Ascend, *Asterth*,

Enter Don JOHN *like a Spirit.*

Why, when, appear I say—Now question him.

ANT. : Where is my whore, *Don* Devil ?

JOHN : Gone to *China*,
To be the great *Chams* Mistress.
ANT. : That's a lye, Devil,
Where are my jewels ?
JOHN : Pawn'd for Petticoats.
ANT. : That may be : where's the Fidler ?
JOHN : Condemn'd to th' Gallows
For robbing of a Mill.
ANT. : The lyingst Devil
That e'r I dealt withal, and the unlikeliest !
What was that Rascal hurt me ?
JOHN : I.
ANT. : How ?
JOHN : I.
ANT. : Who was he ?
JOHN : I.
ANT. : Do you hear conjurer,
Dare you venture your Devil ?
VEC. : Yes.
ANT. : Then I'll venture my dagger ;
Have at your Devils pate ; do you mew ?

Enter all.

VEC. : Hold.
PET. : Hold there,
I do command you hold.
ANT. : Is this the Devil ?
Why, Conjurer—
PET. : He has been a Devil to you, Sir ;
But now you shall forget all ; your whore's safe,
And all your jewels, your Boy too.
JOHN : Now the Devil indeed
Lay his ten claws upon thee, for my pate
Finds what it is to be a Fiend.
ANT. : All safe ?
PET. : 'Pray ye know this person ; all's right now.
ANT. : Your Grace
May now command me then : but where's my whore ?
PET. : Ready to go to whipping.
ANT. : My whore whipt ?
PET. : Yes, your whore without doubt, Sir.
ANT. : Whipt ! 'pray Gentlemen.
DUKE : Why, would you have her once more rob ye ? the young Boy
You may forgive, he was entic'd.
JOHN : The whore, Sir,
Would rather carry pity : a handsome whore.
ANT. : A Gentleman I warrant thee.
PET. : Let's in all,
And if we see contrition in your whore, Sir,
Much may be done.
DUKE : Now my dear fair to you,
And the full consummation of my vow. [*Exeunt.*

1623

THE BONDMAN

(By PHILIP MASSINGER)

The little we know of Philip Massinger (1583–1639) satisfies us that his life was certainly no happier than that of any other playwright of the period. It would seem that the career of an Elizabethan song-bird was hardly complete without experience as a gaol-bird. Poverty was the usual crime. Massinger's bad luck pursued him even in the grave. Within a few years of his burial—at the side of Fletcher, in St. Saviour's, Southwark—the curtain had descended on English drama, under pressure of the Puritans, and when it rose again, after the Civil War, Shakespeare and Jonson and Fletcher were recalled to favour, the great names from the great age ; Massinger remaining unplayed and unpublished for no known reason. His work was at length brought to light only to be plundered without acknowledgment by theatre-tradesmen. Half way through the eighteenth century, unique manuscript copies of eighteen of his plays fells into the hands of a "collector," who allowed them to be appropriated for kitchen service, thus obliterating about half a life work. To be sure, enough masterpieces remain, but who ever heard of them—of *The Roman Actor* and *The Renegado* and *The Fatal Dowry* and *The City Madam* and *The Bondman*? Seldom has Posterity treated a great man more shabbily.

The Bondman is typical of the "tragi-comedies" in which he may be said to have been most in his element. A theme almost staggering in its suggestiveness, greatly handled for the most part, but leaving us at the end with a suspicion that we have been somehow "let down." Massinger is as a runner whose wind begins to fail just as the final effort is called for. We miss the great *dénouement*, but what thrills he has given us by the way ! And, by the way, he is hardly ever coarse.

THE BONDMAN

Characters

TIMOLEON, *the general, of Corinth*
ARCHIDAMUS, *prætor of Syracusa*
DIPHILUS, *a senator of Syracusa*
CLEON, *a fat impotent lord*
MARULLO, *the* BONDMAN (*i.e.* PISANDER, *a gentleman of* THEBES *; disguised as a slave*)
POLIPHRON, *friend to* MARULLO ; *also disguised as a slave*
LEOSTHENES, *a gentleman of Syracusa, enamoured of* CLEORA
ASOTUS, *a foolish lover, and the son of* CLEON
TIMAGORAS, *the son of* ARCHIDAMUS
GRACCULO, CIMBRIO, *slaves*
A GAOLER

CLEORA, *daughter of* ARCHIDAMUS
CORISCA, *a proud wanton lady, wife to* CLEON
OLYMPIA, *a rich widow*
TIMANDRA, *slave to* CLEORA (*i.e.* STATILIA, *sister to* PISANDER)
ZANTHIA, *slave to* CORISCA

Other SLAVES, SOLDIERS, OFFICERS, SENATORS

Scene—SYRACUSE AND THE ADJACENT COUNTRY.

ACT I

SCENE I.—*The Camp of* TIMOLEON, *near Syracuse.*

Enter TIMAGORAS *and* LEOSTHENES.

TIMAG. : Why should you droop, Leosthenes, or despair
My sister's favour ? What, before, you purchased

By courtship and fair language, in these wars,
(For from her soul you know she loves a soldier)
You may deserve by action.

LEOST. : Good Timagoras,
When I have said my friend, think all is spoken
That may assure me yours ; and pray you believe,
The dreadful voice of war that shakes the city,
The thundering threats of Carthage, nor their army
Raised to make good those threats, affright not me.—
If fair Cleora were confirm'd his prize,
That has the strongest arm and sharpest sword,
I'd court Bellona in her horrid trim,
As if she were a mistress ; and bless fortune,
That offers my young valour to the proof,
How much I dare do for your sister's love.
But, when that I consider how averse
Your noble father, great Archidamus,
Is, and hath ever been, to my desires
Reason may warrant me to doubt and fear,
What seeds soever I sow in these wars
Of noble courage, his determinate will
May blast, and give my harvest to another,
That never toil'd for it.

TIMAG. : Prithee, do not nourish
These jealous thoughts ; I am thine, (and pardon me,
Though I repeat it,) thy Timagoras,
That, for thy sake, when the bold Theban sued,
Far-famed Pisander, for my sister's love,
Sent him disgraced and discontented home.
I wrought my father then ; and I, that stopp'd not
In the career of my affection to thee,
When that renowned worthy, that, brought with him
High birth, wealth, courage, as fee'd advocates
To mediate for him ; never will consent
A fool, that only has the shape of man,
Asotus, though he be rich Cleon's heir,
Shall bear her from thee.

LEOST. : In that trust I love.

TIMAG. : Which never shall deceive you.

Enter MARULLO.

MAR. : Sir, the general,
Timoleon, by his trumpets hath given warning
For a remove.

TIMAG. : 'Tis well ; provide my horse.

MAR. : I shall, sir. [*Exit.*

LEOST. : This slave has a strange aspect.

TIMAG. : Fit for his fortune ; 'tis a strong-limb'd knave :
My father bought him for my sister's litter.
O pride of women ! Coaches are too common—
They surfeit in the happiness of peace,
And ladies think they keep not state enough,
If, for their pomp and ease, they are not born
In triumph on men's shoulders.

LEOST. : Who commands
The Carthaginian fleet !
TIMAG. : Gisco's their admiral,
And 'tis our happiness ; a raw young fellow,
One never train'd in arms, but rather fashion'd
To tilt with ladies' lips, than crack a lance ;
Ravish a feather from a mistress' fan,
And wear it as a favour. A steel helmet,
Made horrid with a glorious plume, will crack
His woman's neck.
LEOST. : No more of him.—The motives,
That Corinth gives us aid ?
TIMAG. : The common danger ;
For Sicily being afire, she is not safe :
It being apparent that ambitous Carthage,
That, to enlarge her empire, strives to fasten
An unjust gripe on us that live free lords
Of Syracusa, will not end, till Greece
Acknowledge her their sovereign.
LEOST. : I am satisfied.
What think you of our general ?
TIMAG. : He's a man [*Trumpets within.*
Of strange and reserved parts ; but a great soldier.
His trumpets call us, I'll forbear his character :
To-morrow, in the senate-house, at large
He will express himself.
LEOST. : I'll follow you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Syracuse. A Room in* CLEON'S *House.*

Enter CLEON, CORISCA, *and* GRACCULO.

CORIS. : Nay, good chuck.
CLEON : I've said it ; stay at home :
I cannot brook your gadding ; you're a fair one,
Beauty invites temptations, and short heels
Are soon tripp'd up.
CORIS. : Deny me ! by my honour.
You take no pity on me. I shall swoon
As soon as you are absent ; ask my man else,
You know he dares not tell a lie.
GRAC. : Indeed,
You are no sooner out of sight, but she
Does feel strange qualms ; then sends for her young doctor,
Who ministers physic to her on her back,
Her ladyship lying as she were entranced :
(I've peep'd in at the keyhole, and observed them :)
And sure his potions never fail to work,
For she's so pleasant in the taking them,
She tickles again.
CORIS. : And all's to make you merry,
When you come home.
CLEON : You flatter me ; I am old,
And wisdom cries, Beware !

CORIS. : Old ! duck. To me
You are a young Adonis.
GRAC. : Well said, Venus !
I am sure she Vulcans him. [*Aside.*
CORIS. : I will not change thee
For twenty boisterous young things without beards.
These bristles give the gentlest titillations,
And such a sweet dew flows on them, it cures
My lips without pomatum. Here's a round belly !
'Tis a down pillow to my back ; I sleep
So quietly by it : and this tunable nose,
Faith, when you hear it not, affords such music,
That I curse all night-fiddlers.
GRAC. : This is gross.
Not finds she flouts him ! [*Aside.*
CORIS. : As I live, I am jealous.
CLEON : Jealous of me, wife ?
CORIS. : Yes ; and I have reason ;
Knowing how lusty and active a man you are.
CLEON : Hum, hum !
GRAC. : This is no cunning quean ! 'slight, she will make him
To think that, like a stag, he has cast his horns,
And is grown young again. [*Aside.*
CORIS. : You have forgot.
What you did in your sleep, and, when you waked,
Call'd for a caudle.
GRAC. : It was in his sleep ;
For, waking, I durst trust my mother with him. [*Aside.*
CORIS. : I long to see the man of war : Cleora,
Archidamus' daughter, goes, and rich Olympia :
I will not miss the show.
CLEON : There's no contending :
For this time I am pleased, but I'll no more on't. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The same. The Senate house.*

ARCHIDAMUS, CLEON, DIPHILUS, OLYMPIA, CORISCA, CLEORA, *and* ZANTHIA.

ARCHID. : So careless we have been, my noble lords,
In the disposing of our own affairs,
And ignorant in the art of government,
That now we need a stranger to instruct us.
Yet we are happy that our neighbour Corinth,
Pitying the unjust gripe Carthage would lay
On Syracusa, hath vouchsafed to lend us
Her man of men, Timoleon, to defend
Our country and our liberties.
DIPH. : 'Tis a favour
We are unworthy of, and we may blush
Necessity compels us to receive it.
ARCHID. : O shame ! that we, that are a populous nation,
Engaged to liberal nature, for all blessings
An island can bring forth ; we, that have limbs,
And able bodies ; shipping, arms, and treasure,
The sinews of the war, now we are call'd

To stand upon our guard, cannot produce
One fit to be our general.
CLEON : I am old and fat ;
I could say something, else.
ARCHID. : We must obey
The time and our occasions ; ruinous buildings,
Whose bases and foundations are infirm,
Must use supporters : we are circled round
With danger ; o'er our heads, with sail-stretch'd wings,
Destruction hovers, and a cloud of mischief
Ready to break upon us ; no hope left us
That may divert it, but our sleeping virtue,
Roused up by brave Timoleon.
CLEON : When arrives he ?
DIPH. : He is expected every hour.
ARCHID. : The braveries
Of Syracusa, among whom my son,
Timagoras, Leosthenes, and Asotus,
Your hopeful heir, lord Cleon, two days since
Rode forth to meet him, and attend him to
The city ; every minute we expect
To be bless'd with his presence.
[*Shouts within ; then a flourish of trumpets.*
CLEON : What shout's this ?
DIPH. : 'Tis seconded with loud music.
ARCHID. : Which confirms
His wish'd-for entrance. Let us entertain him
With all respect, solemnity, and pomp,
A man may merit, that comes to redeem us
From slavery and oppression.
CLEON : I'll lock up
My doors, and guard my gold : these lads of Corinth
Have nimble fingers, and I fear them more,
Being within our walls, than those of Carthage ;
They are far off.
ARCHID. : And, ladies, be it your care
To welcome him and his followers with all duty :
For rest resolved, their hands and swords must keep you
In that full height of happiness you live ;
A dreadful change else follows.
[*Exeunt* ARCHIDAMUS, CLEON, *and* DIPHILUS.
OLYMP. : We are instructed.
CORIS. : I'll kiss him for the honour of my country,
With any she in Corinth.
OLYMP. : Were he a courtier,
I've sweetmeat in my closet shall content him,
Be his palate ne'er so curious.
CORIS. : And, if need be,
I have a couch and a banqueting-house in my orchard,
Where many a man of honour has not scorn'd
To spend an afternoon.
OLYMP. : These men of war,
As I have heard, know not to court a lady.
They cannot praise our dressings, kiss our hands,

Usher us to our litters, tell love-stories,
Commend our feet and legs, and so search upwards ;
A sweet becoming boldness ! they are rough,
Boisterous, and saucy, and at the first sight
Ruffle and touze us, and, as they find their stomachs,
Fall roundly to it.

CORIS. : 'Troth, I like them the better :
I can't endure to have a perfumed sir
Stand cringing in the hams, licking his lips
Like a spaniel over a furmenty-pot, and yet
Has not the boldness to come on, or offer
What they know we expect.

OLYMP. : We may commend
A gentleman's modesty, manners, and fine language
His singing, dancing, riding of great horses,
The wearing of his clothes, his fair complexion ;
Take presents from him, and extol his bounty :
Yet, though he observe, and waste his estate upon us,
If he be staunch, and bid not for the stock
That we were born to traffic with ; the truth is,
We care not for his company.

CORIS. : Musing, Cleora ?

OLYMP. : She's studying how to entertain these strangers,
And to engross them to herself.

CLEO. : No, surely ;
I will not cheapen any of their wares,
Till you have made your market ; you will buy,
I know ; at any rate.

CORIS. : She has given it you.

OLYMP. : No more ; they come : the first kiss for this jewel.

ish of trumpets. Enter TIMAGORAS, LEOSTHENES, ASOTUS, TIMOLEON *in black,* *in by* ARCHIDAMUS, DIPHILUS, *and* CLEON ; *followed by* MARULLO, GRACCULO, MBRIO, *and other Slaves.*

ARCHID. : It is your seat : which, with a general suffrage,
[*Offering* TIMOLEON *the state.*
As to the supreme magistrate, Sicily tenders,
And prays Timoleon to accept.

TIMOL. : Such honours
To one ambitious of rule or titles,
Whose heaven on earth is placed in his command,
And absolute power o'er others, would with joy,
And veins swollen high with pride, be entertain'd.
They take not me ; for I have ever loved
An equal freedom, and proclaim'd all such
As would usurp on other's liberties,
Rebels to nature, to whose bounteous blessings
All men lay claim as true legitimate sons :
But such as have made forfeit of themselves
By vicious courses, and their birthright lost,
'Tis not injustice they are mark'd for slaves,
To serve the virtuous. For myself, I know
Honours and great employments are great burdens,
And must require an Atlas to support them.

He that would govern others, first should be
The master of himself, richly endued
With depth of understanding, height of courage,
And those remarkable graces which I dare not
Ascribe unto myself.

ARCHID. : Sir, empty men
Are trumpets of their own deserts ; but you,
That are not in opinion, but in proof,
Really good, and full of glorious parts,
Leave the report of what you are to fame ;
Which, from the ready tongues of all good men,
Aloud proclaims you.

DIPH. : Besides, you stand bound,
Having so large a field to exercise
Your active virtues offer'd you, to impart
Your strength to such as need it.

TIMOL. : 'Tis confess'd :
And, since you'll have it so, such as I am,
For you, and for the liberty of Greece,
I am most ready to lay down my life :
But yet consider, men of Syracusa,
Before that you deliver up the power,
Which yet is yours, to me,—to whom 'tis given ;
To an impartial man, with whom nor threats,
Nor prayers, shall prevail ; for I must steer
An even course.

ARCHID. : Which is desired of all.

TIMOL. : Timophanes, my brother, for whose death
I am tainted in the world, and foully tainted :
In whose remembrance I have ever worn,
In peace and war, this livery of sorrow,
Can witness for me how much I detest
Tyrannous usurpation. With grief,
I must remember it ; for, when no persuasion
Could win him to desist from his bad practice,
To change the aristocracy of Corinth
Into an absolute monarchy, I chose rather
To prove a pious and obedient son
To my country, my best mother, than to lend
Assistance to Timophanes, though my brother,
That, like a tyrant, strove to set his foot
Upon the city's freedom.

TIMAG. : 'Twas a deed
Deserving rather trophies than reproof.

LEOST. : And will be still remember'd to your honour,
If you forsake not us.

DIPH. : If you free Sicily
From barbarous Carthage' yoke, it will be said,
In him you slew a tyrant.

ARCHID. : But, giving way
To her invasion, not vouchsafing us
That fly to your protection, aid and comfort,
'Twill be believed, that, for your private ends,
You kill'd a brother.

TIMOL. : As I then proceed,
To all posterity may that act be crown'd
With a deserved applause, or branded with
The mark of infamy !—Stay yet ; ere I take
This seat of justice, or engage myself
To fight for you abroad, or to reform
Your state at home, swear all upon my sword,
And call the gods of Sicily to witness
The oath you take, that whatsoe'er I shall
Propound for safety of your commonwealth,
Not circumscribed or bound in, shall by you
Be willingly obey'd.

ARCHID., DIPH., CLEON : So may we prosper,
As we obey in all things !

TIMAG., LEOST., ASOT. : And observe
All your commands as oracles !

TIMOL. : Do not repent it. [*Takes the state.*

OLYMP. : He ask'd not our consent.

CORIS. : He's a clown, I warrant him.

OLYMP. : I offer'd myself twice, and yet the churl
Would not salute me.

CORIS. : Let him kiss his drum !
I'll save my lips, I rest on it.

OLYMP. : He thinks women
No part of the republic.

CORIS. : He shall find
We are a commonwealth.

CLEO. : The less your honour.

TIMOL. : First, then, a word or two, but without bitterness,
(And yet mistake me not, I am no flatterer,)
Concerning your ill government of the state ;
In which the greatest, noblest, and most rich,
Stand, in the first file, guilty.

CLEON : Ha ! how's this ?

TIMOL. : You have not, as good patriots should do, studied
The public good, but your particular ends ;
Factious among yourselves, preferring such
To offices and honours, as ne'er read
The elements of saving policy ;
But deeply skill'd in all the principles
That usher to destruction.

LEOST. : Sharp !

TIMAG. : The better.

TIMOL. : Your senate-house, which used not to admit
A man, however popular, to stand
At the helm of government, whose youth was not
Made glorious by action ; whose experience,
Crown'd with gray hairs, gave warrant to his counsels,
Heard and received with reverence, is now fill'd
With green heads, that determine of the state
Over their cups, or when their sated lusts
Afford them leisure ; or supplied by those
Who, rising from base arts and sordid thrift,

Are eminent for their wealth, not for their wisdom :
Which is the reason that to hold a place
In council, which was once esteem'd an honour,
And a reward for virtue, hath quite lost
Lustre and reputation, and is made
A mercenary purchase.

TIMAG. : He speaks home.

LEOST. : And to the purpose.

TIMOL. : From whence it proceeds,
That the treasure of the city is engross'd
By a few private men, the public coffers
Hollow with want ; and they, that will not spare
One talent for the common good, to feed
The pride and bravery of their wives, consume,
In plate, in jewels, and superfluous slaves,
What would maintain an army.

CORIS. : Have at us !

OLYMP. : We thought we were forgot.

CLEO. : But it appears,
You will be treated of.

TIMOL. : Yet, in this plenty,
And fat of peace, your young men ne'er were train'd
In martial discipline ; and your ships unrigg'd,
Rot in the harbour : no defence prepared,
But thought unuseful ; as if that the gods,
Indulgent to your sloth, had granted you,
A perpetuity of pride and pleasure,
No change fear'd or expected. Now you find
That Carthage, looking on your stupid sleeps,
And dull security, was invited to
Invade your territories.

ARCHID. : You have made us see, sir,
To our shame, the country's sickness : now, from you,
As from a careful and a wise physician,
We do expect the cure.

TIMOL. : Old fester'd sores
Must be lanced to the quick, and cauterized ;
Which born with patience, after I'll apply
Soft unguents. For the maintenance of the war,
It is decreed all monies in the hand
Of private men, shall instantly be brought
To the public treasury.

TIMAG. : This bites sore.

CLEON : The cure
Is worse than the disease ; I'll never yield to't :
What could the enemy, though victorious,
Inflict more on us ? All that my youth hath toil'd for,
Purchas'd with industry, and preserved with care,
Forced from me in a moment !

DIPH. : This rough course
Will never be allow'd of.

TIMOL. : O blind men !
If you refuse the first means that is offer'd
To give you health, no hope's left to recover

Your desperate sickness. Do you prize your muck
Above your liberties ; and rather choose
To be made bondmen, than to part with that
To which already you are slaves ? Or can it
Be probable in your flattering apprehensions,
You can capitulate with the conquerors,
And keep that yours which they come to possess,
And, while you kneel in vain, will ravish from you ?
—But take your own ways ; brood upon your gold.
Sacrifice to your idol, and preserve
The prey entire, and merit the report
Of careful stewards : yield a just account
To your proud masters, who, with whips of iron,
Will force you to give up what you conceal,
Or tear it from your throats : adorn your walls
With Persian hangings wrought of gold and pearl ;
Cover the floors, on which they are to tread,
With costly Median silks ? perfume the rooms
With cassia and amber, where they are
To feast and revel ; while, like servile grooms,
You wait upon their trenchers : feed their eyes
With massy plate, until your cupboards crack
With the weight that they sustain ; set forth your wives
And daughters in as many varied shapes
As there are nations, to provoke their lusts,
And let them be embraced before your eyes,
The object may content you ! and, to perfect
Their entertainment, offer up your sons,
And able men, for slaves ; while you, that are
Unfit for labour, are spurn'd out to starve,
Unpitied, in some desert, no friend by,
Whose sorrow may spare one compassionate tear,
In the remembrance of what once you were.

LEOST. : The blood turns.

TIMAG. : Observe how old Cleon shakes,
As if in picture he had shown him what
He was to suffer.

CORIS. : I am sick ; the man
Speaks poniards and diseases.

OLYMP. : O my doctor !
I shall never recover.

CLEO. (*coming forward*) : If a virgin,
Whose speech was ever yet usher'd with fear ;
One knowing modesty and humble silence
To be the choicest ornaments of our sex,
In the presence of so many reverend men
Struck dumb with terror and astonishment,
Presume to clothe her thought in vocal sounds,
Let her find pardon. First to you, great sir,
A bashful maid's thanks, and her zealous prayers
Wing'd with pure innocence, bearing them to heaven,
For all prosperity that the gods can give
To one whose piety must exact their care,
Thus low I offer.

TIMOL. : 'Tis a happy omen.
Rise, blest one, and speak boldly. On my virtue,
I am thy warrant, from so clear a spring
Sweet rivers ever flow.

CLEO. : Then, thus to you,
My noble father, and these lords, to whom
I next owe duty : no respect forgotten
To you, my brother, and these bold young men,
(Such I would have them,) that are, or should be,
The city's sword and target of defence.
To all of you I speak ; and, if a blush
Steal on my cheeks, it is shown to reprove
Your paleness, willingly I would not say,
Your cowardice or fear : Think you all treasure
Hid in the bowels of the earth, or shipwreck'd
In Neptune's wat'ry kingdom, can hold weight,
When liberty and honour fill one scale,
Triumphant Justice sitting on the beam ?
Or dare you but imagine that your gold is
Too dear a salary for such as hazard
Their blood and lives in your defence ? For me,
An ignorant girl, bear witness, heaven ! so far
I prize a soldier, that, to give him pay,
With such devotion as our flamens offer
Their sacrifices at the holy altar,
I do lay down these jewels, will make sale
Of my superfluous wardrobe, to supply
The meanest of their wants.

[*Lays down her jewels, &c. ; the rest follow her example.*

TIMOL. : Brave masculine spirit !

DIPH. : We are shown, to our shame, what we in honour
Should have taught others.

ARCHID. : Such a fair example
Must needs be follow'd.

TIMAG. : Ever my dear sister,
But now our family's glory !

LEOST. : Were she deform'd,
The virtues of her mind would force a stoic
To sue to be her servant.

CLEON : I must yield ;
And, though my heart-blood part with it, I will
Deliver in my wealth.

ASOT. : I would say something ;
But, the truth is, I know not what.

TIMOL. : We have money ;
And men must now be thought on.

ARCHID. : We can press
Of labourers in the country, men inured
To cold and heat, ten thousand.

DIPH. : Or, if need be,
Enrol our slaves, lusty and able varlets,
And fit for service.

CLEON. : They shall go for me ;
I will not pay and fight too.

CLEO. : How ! your slaves ?
O stain of honour !——Once more, sir, your pardon ;
And, to their shames, let me deliver what
I know in justice you may speak.

TIMOL. : Most gladly :
I could not wish my thoughts a better organ
Than your tongue, to express them.

CLEO. : Are you men !
(For age may qualify, though not excuse,
The backwardness of these,) able young men !
Yet, now your country's liberty's at the stake,
Honour and glorious triumph made the garland
For such as dare deserve them ; a rich feast
Prepared by Victory, of immortal viands,
Not for base men, but such as with their swords
Dare force admittance, and will be her guests :
And can you coldly suffer such rewards
To be proposed to labourers and slaves ?
While you, that are born noble, to whom these,
Valued at their best rate, are next to horses,
Or other beasts of carriage, cry aim !
Like idle lookers on, till their proud worth
Make them become your masters !

TIMOL. : By my hopes,
There's fire and spirit enough in this to make
Thersites valiant.

CLEO. : No ; far, far be it from you :
Let these of meaner quality contend
Who can endure most labour ; plough the earth,
And think they are rewarded when their sweat
Brings home a fruitful harvest to their lords ;
Let them prove good artificers, and serve you
For use and ornament, but not presume
To touch at what is noble. If you think them
Unworthy to taste of those cates you feed on,
Or wear such costly garments, will you grant them
The privilege and prerogative of great minds,
Which you were born to ? Honour won in war,
And to be styled preservers of their country,
Are titles fit for free and generous spirits,
And not for bondmen : had I been born a man,
And such ne'er-dying glories made the prize
To bold heroic courage, by Diana,
I would not to my brother, nay, my father,
Be bribed to part with the least piece of honour
I should gain in this action !

TIMOL. : She's inspired,
Or in her speaks the genius of your country,
To fire your blood in her defence : I am rapt
With the imagination. Noble maid,
Timoleon is your soldier, and will sweat

Drops of his best blood, but he will bring home
Triumphant conquest to you. Let me wear
Your colours, lady ; and though youthful heats,
That look no further than your outward form,
Are long since buried in me ; while I live,
I am a constant lover of your mind,
That does transcend all precedents.

CLEO. : 'Tis an honour, [*Gives her scarf.*
And so I do receive it.

CORIS. : Plague upon it !
She has got the start of us : I could even burst
With envy at her fortune.

OLYMP. : A raw young thing !
We have too much tongue sometimes, our husbands say,—
And she outstrip us !

LEOST. : I am for the journey.

TIMAG. : May all diseases sloth and letchery bring,
Fall upon him that stays at home !

ARCHID. : Though old.
I will be there in person.

DIPH. : So will I :
Methinks I am not what I was ; her words
Have made me younger, by a score of years,
Than I was when I came hither.

CLEON. : I am still
Old Cleon, fat and unwieldly ; I shall never
Make a good soldier, and therefore desire
To be excused at home.

ASOT. : 'Tis my suit too :
I am a gristle, and these spider fingers
Will never hold a sword. Let us alone
To rule the slaves at home : I can so yerk them—
But in my conscience I shall never prove
Good justice in the war.

TIMOL. : Have your desires ;
You would be burthens to us, no way aids.—
Lead, fairest, to the temple ; first we'll pay
A sacrifice to the gods for good success :
For all great actions the wish'd course do run,
That are, with their allowance, well begun.

[*Exeunt all but* MAR., GRAC., *and* CIMB.

MAR. : Stay, Cimbrio and Gracculo.

CIMB. : The business ?

MAR. : Meet me to-morrow night near to the grove,
Neighbouring the east part of the city.

GRAC. : Well.

MAR. : And bring the rest of our condition with you :
I've something to impart may break our fetters,
If you dare second me.

CIMB. : We'll not fail.

GRAC. : A cart-rope
Shall not bind me at home.

MAR. : Think on't, and prosper. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*The same. A Room in* ARCHIDAMUS'S *House.*

Enter ARCHIDAMUS, TIMAGORAS, LEOSTHENES, *with gorgets; and* MARULLO.

ARCHID. : So, so, 'tis well : how do I look ?
MAR. : Most sprightfully.
ARCHID. : I shrink not in the shoulders ; though I'm old
I'm tough, steel to the back ; I have not wasted
My stock of strength in feather-beds : here's an arm too ;
There's stuff in't, and I hope will use a sword
As well as any beardless boy of you all.
TIMAG. : I'm glad to see you, sir, so well prepared
To endure the travail of the war.
ARCHID. : Go to, sirrah !
I shall endure, when some of you keep your cabins,
For all your flaunting feathers : nay, Leosthenes,
You are welcome too, all friends and fellows now.
LEOST. : Your servant, sir.
ARCHID. : Pish ! leave these compliments,
They stink in a soldier's mouth ; I could be merry,
For, now my gown's off, farewell gravity !
And must be bold to put a question to you,
Without offence, I hope.
LEOST. : Sir, what you please.
ARCHID. : And you will answer truly ?
TIMAG. : On our words, sir.
ARCHID. : Go to, then : I presume you will confess
That you are two notorious whoremasters—
Nay, spare your blushing, I've been wild myself,
A smack or so for physic does no harm ;
Nay, it is physic, if used moderately ;
But to lie at rack and manger——
LEOST. : Say we grant this,
For if we should deny't, you will not believe us,
What will you infer upon it ?
ARCHID. : What you'll groan for,
I fear, when you come to the test. Old stories tell us,
There's a month call'd October, which brings in
Cold weather ; there are trenches too, 'tis rumour'd,
In which to stand all night to the knees in water,
In gallants breeds the toothach ; there's a sport too,
Named *lying perdue*, do you mark me ? 'tis a game
Which you must learn to play at : now in these seasons,
And choice variety of exercises,
(Nay, I come to you,) and fasts, not for devotion,
Your rambling hunt-smock feels strange alterations ;
And, in a frosty morning, looks as if
He could with ease creep in a pottle-pot,
Instead of his mistress' placket. Then he curses
The time he spent in midnight visitations ;
And finds what he superfluously parted with,
To be reported good at length, and well breath'd,
If but retrieved into his back again,
Would keep him warmer than a scarlet waistcoat,

Enter DIPHILUS *and* CLEORA.

Or an armour lined with fur—O welcome ! welcome !
You have cut off my discourse ; but I will pérfect
My lecture in thè camp.
DIPH. : Come, we are stay'd for ;
The general's afire for a remove,
And longs to be in action.
ARCHID. : 'Tis my wish too.
We must part—nay, no tears, my best Cleora ;
I shall melt too, and that were ominous.
Millions of blessings on thee ! All that's mine
I give up to thy charge ; and, sirrah, look. [*To* MARULLO.
You with that care and reverence observe her,
Which you would pay to me.—A kiss ; farewell, girl !
DIPH. : Peace wait upon you, fair one !

[*Exeunt* ARCHIDAMUS, DIPHILUS, *and* MARULLO.

TIMAG. : 'Twere impertinence
To wish you to be careful of your honour,
That ever keep in pay a guard about you
Of faithful virtues : farewell !—Friend, I leave you
To wipe our kisses off ; I know that lovers
Part with more circumstance and ceremony :
Which I give way to. [*Exit.*
LEOST. : 'Tis a noble favour,
For which I ever owe you. We are alone ;
But how I should begin, or in what language
Speak the unwilling word of parting from you,
I am yet to learn.
CLEO. : And still continue ignorant :
For I must be most cruel to myself,
If I should teach you.
LEOST. : Yet it must be spoken,
Or you will chide my slackness. You have fired me
With the heat of noble action to deserve you ;
And the least spark of honour that took life
From your sweet breath, still fann'd by it and cherish'd,
Must mount up in a glorious flame, or I
Am much unworthy.
CLEO. : May it not burn here,
And, as a seamark, serve to guide true lovers,
Toss'd on the ocean of luxurious wishes,
Safe from the rocks of lust into the harbour
Of pure affection ? rising up an example
Which aftertimes shall witness, to our glory,
First took from us beginning.
LEOST. : 'Tis a happiness
My duty to my country, and mine honour
Cannot consent to ; besides, add to these,
It was your pleasure, fortified by persuasion,
And strength of reason, for the general good,
That I should go.
CLEO. : Alas ! I then was witty
To plead against myself ; and mine eye, fix'd

Upon the hill of honour, ne'er descended
To look into the vale of certain dangers,
Through which you were to cut your passage to it.
LEOST. : I'll stay at home, then.
CLEO. : No, that must not be ;
For so, to serve my own ends, and to gain
A petty wreath myself, I rob you of
A certain triumph, which must fall upon you,
Or Virtue's turn'd a handmaid to blind Fortune.
How is my soul divided ! to confirm you
In the opinion of the world, most worthy
To be beloved, (with me you're at the height,
And can advance no further,) I must send you
To court the goddess of stern war, who, if
She see you with my eyes, will ne'er return you,
But grow enamour'd of you.
LEOST. : Sweet, take comfort !
And what I offer you, you must vouchsafe me
Or I am wretched. All the dangers that
I can encounter in the war, are trifles ;
My enemies abroad to be contemn'd :
The dreadful foes, that have the power to hurt me,
I leave at home with you.
CLEO. : With me !
LEOST. : Nay, in you.
In every part about you, they are arm'd
To fight against me.
CLEO. : Where ?
LEOST. : There's no perfection
That you are mistress of, but musters up
A legion against me, and all sworn
To my destruction.
CLEO. : This is strange !
LEOST. : But true, sweet ;
Excess of love can work such miracles !
Upon this ivory forehead are intrench'd
Ten thousand rivals, and these sums command
Supplies from all the world, on pain to forfeit
Their comfortable beams ; these ruby lips,
A rich exchequer to assure their pay :
This hand, Sibylla's golden bough to guard them
Through hell, and horror, to the Elysian springs :
Which who'll not venture for ? and, should I name
Such as the virtues of your mind invite,
Their numbers would be infinite.
CLEO. : Can you think
I may be tempted ?
LEOST. : You were never proved.
For me, I have conversed with you no further
Than would become a brother. I ne'er tuned
Loose notes to your chaste ears ; or brought rich presents
For my artillery, to batter down
The fortress of your honour ; nor endeavour'd
To make your blood run high at solemn feasts,

With viands that provoke ; the speeding philtres :
I work'd no bawds to tempt you ; never practised
The cunning and corrupting arts they study,
That wander in the wild maze of desire ;
Honest simplicity and truth were all
The agents I employ'd ; and when I came
To see you, it was with that reverence
As I beheld the altars of the gods :
And Love, that came along with me, was taught
To leave his arrows and his torch behind,
Quench'd in my fear to give offence.

CLEO. : And 'twas
That modesty that took me, and preserves me,
Like a fresh rose, in mine own natural sweetness ;
Which, sullied with the touch of impure hands,
Loses both scent and beauty.

LEOST. : But, Cleora,
When I am absent, as I must go from you,
(Such is the cruelty of my fate,) and leave you,
Unguarded, to the violent assaults
Of loose temptations ; when the memory
Of my so many years of love and service
Is lost in other objects ; when you are courted
By such as keep a catalogue of their conquests,
Won upon credulous virgins ; when nor father
Is here to owe you, brother to advise you,
Nor your poor servant by, to keep such off,
By lust instructed how to undermine,
And blow your chastity up ; when your weak senses,
At once assaulted, shall conspire against you,
And play the traitors to your soul, your virtue ;
How can you stand ? 'Faith, though you fall, and I
The judge, before whom you then stood accused,
I should acquit you.

CLEO. : Will you then confirm
That love and jealousy, though of different natures,
Must of necessity be twins ; the younger
Created only to defeat the elder,
And spoil him of his birthright ? 'tis not well.
But being to part, I will not chide, I will not ;
Nor with one syllable or tear, express
How deeply I am wounded with the arrows
Of your distrust : but when that you shall hear,
At your return, how I have born myself,
And what an austere penance I take on me,
To satisfy your doubts ; when, like a Vestal,
I shew you, to your shame, the fire still burning,
Committed to my charge by true affection,
The people joining with you in the wonder ;
When, by the glorious splendour of my sufferings,
The prying eyes of jealousy are struck blind,
The monster too that feeds on fears, e'en starv'd
For want of seeming matter to accuse me ;

Expect, Leosthenes, a sharp reproof
From my just anger.
LEOST. : What will you do ?
CLEO. : Obey me,
Or from this minute you are a stranger to me ;
And do't without reply. All-seeing sun,
Thou witness of my innocence, thus I close
Mine eyes against thy comfortable light,
Till the return of this distrustful man !
Now bind them sure :—nay, do't :
[*He binds her eyes with her scarf.*
If, uncompell'd,
I loose this knot, until the hands that made it
Be pleased to untie it, may consuming plagues
Fall heavy on me ! pray you guide me to your lips
This kiss, when you come back, shall be a virgin
To bid you welcome ; nay, I have not done yet :
I will continue dumb, and, you once gone,
No accent shall come from me. Now to my chamber,
My tomb, if you miscarry : there I'll spend
My hours in silent mourning, and thus much
Shall be reported of me to my glory,
And you confess it, whether I live or die,
My chastity triumphs o'er your jealousy. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The same. A Room in* CLEON'S *House.*

Enter ASOTUS, *driving in* GRACCULO.

ASOT. : You slave ! you dog ! down, cur.
GRAC. : Hold, good young master,
For pity's sake !
ASOT. : Now am I in my kingdom :—
Who says I am not valiant ? I begin
To frown again : quake, villain !
GRAC. : So I do, sir !
Your looks are agues to me.
ASOT. : Are they so, sir !
'Slight, if I had them at this bay that flout me,
And say I look like a sheep and an ass, I'd make them
Feel that I am a lion.
GRAC. : Do not roar, sir,
As you are a valiant beast : but do you know
Why you use me thus ?
ASOT. : I'll beat thee a little more,
Then study for a reason. O ! I have it :
One brake a jest on me, and then I swore,
(Because I durst not strike him,) when I came home,
That I would break thy head.
GRAC. : Plague on his mirth !
I'm sure I mourn for't.
ASOT. : Remember, too, I charge you,
To teach my horse good manners yet ; this morning,
As I rode to take the air, the untutor'd jade
Threw me, and kicked me.

GRAC. : I thank him for't. [*Aside.*
ASOT. : What's that ?
GRAC. : I say, sir, I will teach him to hold his heels,
If you will rule your fingers.
ASOT. : I'll think upon't.
GRAC. : I am bruised to jelly : better be a dog,
Than slave to a fool or coward. [*Aside.*
ASOT. : Here's my mother,

Enter CORISCA *and* ZANTHIA.

She is chastising too : how brave we live,
That have our slaves to beat, to keep us in breath
When we want exercise !
CORIS. : Careless harlotry, [*Striking her.*
Look to't ; if a curl fall, or wind or sun
Take my complexion off, I will not leave
One hair upon thine head.
GRAC. : Here's a second show
Of the family of pride ! [*Aside.*
CORIS. : Fie on these wars !
I'm starv'd for want of action ; not a gamester left
To keep a woman play. If this world last
A little longer with us, ladies must study
Some new-found mystery to cool one another,
We shall burn to cinders else. I have heard there have been
Such arts in a long vacation ; would they were
Reveal'd to me ! they have made my doctor, too,
Physician to the army : he was used
To serve the turn at a pinch ; but I am now
Quite unprovided.
ASOT. : My mother-in-law is, sure,
At her devotion.
CORIS. : There are none but our slaves left,
Nor are they to be trusted. Some great women,
Which I could name, in a dearth of visitants,
Rather than be idle, have been glad to play
At small game ; but I am so queasy-stomach'd,
And from my youth have been so used to dainties,
I cannot taste such gross meat. Some that are hungry
Draw on their shoemakers, and take a fall,
From such as mend mats in their galleries ;
Or when a tailor settles a petticoat on,
Take measure of his bodkin ; fie upon't !
'Tis base ; for my part, I could rather lie with
A gallant's breeches, and conceive upon them,
Than stoop so low.
ASOT. : Fair madam, and my mother.
CORIS. : Leave the last out, it smells rank of the country,
And shews coarse breeding ; your true courtier knows not
His niece, or sister, from another woman,
If she be apt and cunning.—I could tempt now
This fool, but he will be so long a working
Then he's my husband's son :—the fitter to
Supply his wants ; I have the way already,

I'll try if it will take.—When were you with
Your mistress, fair Cleora?
ASOT. : Two days sithence;
But she's so coy, forsooth, that ere I can
Speak a penn'd speech I have bought and studied for her,
Her woman calls her away.
CORIS. : Here's a dull thing!
But better taught, I hope.—Send off your man.
ASOT. : Sirrah, begone.
GRAC. : This is the first good turn
She ever did me. [*Aside and exit.*
CORIS. : We'll have a scene of mirth;
I must not have you shamed for want of practice.
I stand here for Cleora, and, do you hear, minion,
That you may tell her what her woman should do,
Repeat the lesson over that I taught you,
When my young lord came to visit me: if you miss
In a syllable or posture——
ZANT. : I am perfect.
ASOT. : Would I were so! I fear I shall be out.
CORIS. : If you are, I'll help you in. Thus I walk musing:
You are to enter, and, as you pass by,
Salute my woman;—be but bold enough,
You'll speed, I warrant you. Begin.
ASOT. : Have at it——
Save thee, sweetheart! a kiss.
ZANT. : Venus forbid, sir,
I should presume to taste your honour's lips
Before my lady.
CORIS. : This is well on both parts.
ASOT. : How does thy lady?
ZANT. : Happy in your lordship,
As oft she thinks on you.
CORIS. : Very good;
This wench will learn in time.
ASOT. : Does she think of me?
ZANT. : O, sir! and speaks the best of you; admires
Your wit, your clothes, discourse; and swears, but that
You are not forward enough for a lord, you were
The most complete and absolute man,—I'll show
Your lordship a secret.
ASOT. : Not of thine own?
ZANT. : O! no, sir,
'Tis of my lady: but, upon your honour,
You must conceal it.
ASOT. : By all means.
ZANT. : Sometimes.
I lie with my lady, as the last night I did;
She could not say her prayers for thinking of you:
Nay, she talk'd of you in her sleep, and sigh'd out,
O sweet Asotus, sure thou art so backward,
That I must ravish thee! and in that fervour
She took me in her arms, threw me upon her,

Kiss'd me, and hugg'd me, and then waked, and wept,
Because 'twas but a dream.
CORIS. : This will bring him on,
Or he's a block.—A good girl !
ASOT. : I am mad,
Till I am at it.
ZANT. : Be not put off, sir,
With, *Away, I dare not ;—fie, you are immodest ;—*
My brother's up ;—My father will hear,—
Shoot home, sir,
You cannot miss the mark.
ASOT. : There's for thy counsel.
This is the fairest interlude—if it prove earnest,
I shall wish I were a player.
CORIS. : Now my turn comes.—
I am exceeding sick, pray you send my page
For young Asotus, I cannot live without him ;
Pray him to visit me ; yet, when he's present,
I must be strange to him.
ASOT. : Not so, you are caught :
Lo, whom you wish ; behold Asotus here !
CORIS. : You wait well, minion ; shortly I shall not speak
My thoughts in my private chamber, but they must
Lie open to discovery.
ASOT. : 'Slid, she's angry.
ZANT. : No, no, sir, she but seems so. To her again.
ASOT. : Lady, I would descend to kiss your hand,
But that 'tis gloved, and civet makes me sick ;
And to presume to taste your lip's not safe,
Your woman by.
CORIS. : I hope she's no observer
Of whom I grace. [ZANTHIA *looks on a book.*
ASOT. : She's at her book, O rare ! [*Kisses her.*
CORIS. : A kiss for entertainment is sufficient ;
Too much of one dish cloys me.
ASOT. : I would serve in
The second course ; but still I fear your woman.
CORIS. : You are very cautelous. [ZANTHIA *seems to sleep.*
ASOT. : 'Slight, she's asleep !
'Tis pity these instructions are not printed ;
They would sell well to chambermaids. 'Tis no time now
To play with my good fortune, and your favour ;
Yet to be taken, as they say :—a scout,
To give the signal when the enemy comes,
[*Exeunt* ZANTHIA.
Were now worth gold.—She's gone to watch.
A waiter so train'd up were worth a million
To a wanton city madam.
CORIS. : You are grown conceited.
ASOT. : You teach me. Lady, now your cabinet—
CORIS. : You speak as it were yours.
ASOT. : When we are there,
I'll shew you my best evidence. [*Seizing her.*

CORIS. : Hold ! you forget,
I only play Cleora's part.
ASOT. : No matter,
Now we've begun, let's end the act.
CORIS. : Forbear, sir ;
Your father's wife !——
ASOT. : Why, being his heir, I am bound,
Since he can make no satisfaction to you,
To see his debts paid.

Re-enter ZANTHIA *running.*

ZANT. : Madam, my lord !
CORIS. : Fall off :
I must trifle with the time too, hell confound it !
ASOT. : Plague on his toothless chaps ! he cannot do't
Himself, yet hinders such as have good stomachs.

Enter CLEON.

CLEON. : Where are you, wife ? I fain would go abroad,
But cannot find my slaves that bear my litter ;
I am tired. Your shoulder, son ;—nay, sweet, thy hand, too :
A turn or two in the garden, and then to supper,
And so to bed.
ASOT. : Never to rise, I hope, more. [*Aside.*
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Grove near the Walls of Scyracuse.*

Enter MARULLO *and* POLIPHRON. *A table set out with Wine, &c.*

MAR. : 'Twill take, I warrant thee.
POLIPH. : You may do your pleasure ;
But, in my judgment, better to make use of
The present opportunity.
MAR. : No more.
POLIPH. : I am silenced.
MAR. : More wine ; prithee drink hard, friend,
And when we're hot, whatever I propound,

Enter CIMBRIO, GRACCULO, *and other Slaves.*

Second with vehemence.—Men of your words, all welcome !
Slaves use no ceremony ; sit down, here's a health.
POLIPH. : Let it run round, fill every man his glass.
GRAC. : We look for no waiters ;—this is wine !
MAR. : The better,
Strong, lusty wine : drink deep, this juice will make us
As free as our lords. [*Drinks.*
GRAC. : But if they find we taste it,
We are all damn'd to the quarry during life,
Without hope of redemption.
MAR. : Pish ! for that
We'll talk anon : another rouse ! we lose time ; [*Drinks.*
When our low blood's wound up a little higher,
I'll offer my design ; nay, we are cold yet ;
These glasses contain nothing ;—do me right, [*Takes the bottle.*

As e'er you hope for liberty. 'Tis done bravely ;
How do you feel yourselves now?

CIMB. : I begin
To have strange conundrums in my head.

GRAC. : And I
To loath base water : I would be hang'd in peace now,
For one month of such holidays.

MAR. : An age, boys,
And yet defy the whip ; if you are men,
Or dare believe you have souls.

CIMB. : We are no brokers.

GRAC. : Nor whores, whose marks are out of their mouths, they have none ;
They hardly can get salt enough to keep them
From stinking above ground.

MAR. : Our lords are no gods——

GRAC. : They are devils to us, I am sure.

MAR. : But subject to
Cold, hunger, and diseases.

GRAC. : In abundance.
Your lord that feels an ache in his chine at twenty,
Forfeits his privilege ; how should their surgeons build else,
Or ride on their footcloths?

MAR. : Equal Nature fashion'd us
All in one mould. The bear serves not the bear,
Nor the wolf the wolf ; 'twas odds of strength in tyrants,
That pluck'd the first link from the golden chain
With which that THING OF THINGS bound in the world.
Why then, since we are taught, by their examples,
To love our liberty, if not command,
Should the strong serve the weak, the fair, deform'd ones?
Or such as know the cause of things, pay tribute
To ignorant fools? All's but the outward gloss,
And politic form, that does distinguish us.—
Cimbrio, thou art a strong man ; if, in place
Of carrying burthens, thou hadst been train'd up
In martial discipline, thou might'st have proved
A general, fit to lead, and fight for Sicily,
As fortunate as Timoleon.

CIMB. : A little fighting
Will serve a general's turn.

MAR. : Thou, Gracculo,
Hast fluency of language, quick conceit ;
And, I think, cover'd with a senator's robe,
Formally set on the bench, thou wouldst appear
As brave a senator.

GRAC. : Would I had lands,
Or money to buy a place ! and if I did not
Sleep on the bench with the drowsiest of them, play with my chain,
Look on my watch, when my guts chimed twelve, and wear
A state beard, with my barber's help, rank with them
In their most choice peculiar gifts ; degrade me,
And put me to drink water again, which, now
I have tasted wine, were poison !

MAR. : 'Tis spoke nobly,
And like a gownman : none of these, I think too,
But would prove good burghers.
GRAC. : Hum ! the fools are modest ;
I know their insides : here's an ill-faced fellow,
(But that will not be seen in a dark shop,)
If he did not in a month learn to outswear,
In the selling of his wares, the cunning'st tradesman
In Syracuse, I have no skill. Here's another,
Observe but what a cozening look he has !—
Hold up thy head, man ; if, for drawing gallants
Into mortgages for commodities, cheating heirs
With your new counterfeit gold thread, and gumm'd velvets,
He does not transcend all that went before him,
Call in his patent : pass the rest ; they'll all make
Sufficient beccos, and, with their brow-antlers,
Bear up the cap of maintenance.
MAR. : Is't not pity, then,
Men of such eminent virtues should be slaves ?
CIMB. : Our fortune.
MAR. : 'Tis your folly ; daring men
Command and make their fates. Say, at this instant,
I mark'd you out a way to liberty ;
Possess'd you of those blessings, our proud lords
So long have surfeited in ; and, what is sweetest,
Arm you with power, by strong hand to revenge
Your stripes, your unregarded toil, the pride
The insolence of such as tread upon
Your patient sufferings ; fill your famish'd mouths
With the fat and plenty of the land ; redeem you
From the dark vale of servitude, and seat you
Upon a hill of happiness ; what would you do
To purchase this, and more ?
GRAC. : Do ! any thing :
To burn a church or two, and dance by the light on't,
Were but a May-game.
POLIPH. : I have a father living ;
But, if the cutting of his throat could work this,
He should excuse me.
CIMB. : 'Slight ! I would cut mine own,
Rather than miss it ; so I might but have
A taste on't, ere I die.
MAR. : Be resolute men ;
You shall run no such hazard, nor groan under
The burthen of such crying sins.
CIMB. : The means ?
GRAC. : I feel a woman's longing.
POLIPH. : Do not torment us
With expectation.
MAR. : Thus, then : Our proud masters
And all the able freemen of the city,
Are gone unto the wars——
POLIPH. : Observe but that.

MAR. : Old men, and such as can make no resistance,
Are only left at home——
GRAG. : And the proud young fool,
My master—if this take, I'll hamper him.
MAR. : Their arsenal, their treasure's in our power,
If we have hearts to seize them. If our lords fall
In the present action, the whole country's ours ;
Say they return victorious, we have means
To keep the town against them ; at the worst,
To make our own conditions. Now, if you dare
Fall on their daughters and their wives, break up
Their iron chests, banquet on their rich beds,
And carve yourselves of all delights and pleasures
You have been barr'd from, with one voice cry with me,
Liberty ! liberty !
ALL : Liberty ! liberty !
MAR. : Go then, and take possession : use all freedom ;
But shed no blood. (*Exeunt* SLAVES.)—So, this is well begun ;
But not to be commended, till't be done. [*Exit.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—*The same. A Gallery in* ARCHIDAMUS's *House.*

Enter MARULLO *and* TIMANDRA.

MAR. : Why, think you that I plot against myself?
Fear nothing, you are safe : these thick-skinn'd slaves,
I use as instruments to serve my ends,
Pierce not my deep designs ; nor shall they dare
To lift an arm against you.
TIMAND. : With your will.
But turbulent spirits, raised beyond themselves
With ease, are not so soon laid ; they oft prove
Dangerous to him that call'd them up.
MAR. : 'Tis true,
In what is rashly undertook. Long since
I have considered seriously their natures,
Proceeded with mature advice, and know
I hold their will and faculties in more awe
Than I can do my own. Now, for their license,
And riot in the city, I can make
A just defence and use : it may appear too
A politic prevention of such ills
As might, with greater violence and danger,
Hereafter be attempted ; though some smart for't,
It matters not :—however, I'm resolved ;
And sleep you with security. Holds Cleora
Constant to her rash vow?
TIMAND. : Beyond belief ;
To me, that see her hourly, it seems a fable.
By signs I guess at her commands, and serve them
With silence ; such her pleasure is, made known
By holding her fair hand thus. She eats little,
Sleeps less, as I imagine ; once a day
I lead her to this gallery, where she walks

Some half a dozen turns, and, having offer'd
To her absent saint a sacrifice of sighs,
She points back to her prison.
MAR. : Guide her hither,
And make her understand the slaves' revolt ;
And, with your utmost eloquence, enlarge
Their insolence, and rapes done in the city.
Forget not too, I am their chief, and tell her
You strongly think my extreme dotage on her,
As I'm Marullo, caused this sudden uproar,
To make way to enjoy her.
TIMAND. : Punctually
I will discharge my part. [*Exit.*

Enter POLIPHRON.

POLIPH. : O, sir, I sought you :
You've missed the best sport ! Hell, I think's broke loose ;
There's such variety of all disorders,
As leaping, shouting, drinking, dancing, whoring,
Among the slaves ; answer'd with crying, howling,
By the citizens and their wives ; such a confusion,
In a word, not to tire you, as I think,
The like was never read of.
MAR. : I share in
The pleasure, though I'm absent. This is some
Revenge for my disgrace.
POLIPH. : But, sir, I fear,
If your authority restrain them not,
They'll fire the city, or kill one another,
They are so apt to outrage ; neither know I
Whether you wish it, and came therefore to
Acquaint you with so much.
MAR. : I will among them ;
But must not long be absent.
POLIPH. : At your pleasure. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The same. A Room in the same.*

Shouts within. Enter CLEORA *and* TIMANDRA.

TIMAND. : They are at our gates : my heart ! affrights and horrors
Increase each minute. No way left to save us,
No flattering hope to comfort us, or means,
But miracle, to redeem us from base lust
And lawless rapine ! Are there gods, yet suffer
Such innocent sweetness to be made the spoil
Of brutish appetite ? or since they decree
To ruin nature's masterpiece, of which
They have not left one pattern, must they choose,
To set their tyranny off, slaves to pollute
The spring of chastity, and poison it,
With their most loath'd embraces ? and, of those,
He that should offer up his life to guard it,
Marullo, curs'd Marullo, your own bondman,
Purchased to serve you, and fed by your favours ?—

Nay, start not : it is he : he, the grand captain
Of these libidinous beasts, that have not left
One cruel act undone, that barbarous conquest
Yet ever practised in a captive city,
He, doating on your beauty, and to have fellows
In his foul sin, hath raised these mutinous slaves,
Who have begun to game by violent rapes
Upon the wives and daughters of their lords ;
And he, to quench the fire of his base lust,
By force, comes to enjoy you—do not wring
Your innocent hands, 'tis bootless ; use the means
That may preserve you. 'Tis no crime to break
A vow when you are forced to it ; shew your face,
And with the majesty of commanding beauty,
Strike dead his loose affections : if that fail,
Give liberty to your tongue, and use entreaties ;
There cannot be a breast of flesh and blood,
Or heart so made of flint, but must receive
Impression from your words ; or eyes so stern,
But, from the clear reflection of your tears,
Must melt, and bear them company. Will you not
Do these good offices to yourself ? poor I, then,
Can only weep your fortune : here he comes.

Enter MARULLO, *speaking at the door.*

MAR. : He that advances
A foot beyond this, comes upon my sword :
You have had your ways, disturb not mine.
TIMAND. : Speak gently,
Her fears may kill her else.
MAR. : Now Love inspire me !
Still shall this canopy of envious night
Obscure my suns of comfort ? and those dainties
Of purest white and red, which I take in at
My greedy eyes, denied my famish'd senses ?—
The organs of your hearing yet are open :
And you infringe no vow, though you vouchsafe
To give them warrant to convey unto
Your understanding parts the story of
A tortured and despairing lover, whom
Not fortune but affection marks your slave :—
Shake not, best lady ! for believ't, you are
As far from danger as I am from force :
All violence I shall offer, tends no further
Than to relate my sufferings, which I dare not
Presume to do, till, by some gracious sign,
You shew you are pleased to hear me.
TIMAND. : If you are,
Hold forth your right hand. [CLEORA *holds forth her right hand.*
MAR. : So, 'tis done ; and I
With my glad lips seal humbly on your foot,
My soul's thanks for the favour : I forbear
To tell you who I am, what wealth, what honours
I made exchange of, to become your servant :

And, though I knew worthy Leosthenes
(For sure he must be worthy, for whose love
You have endured so much) to be my rival ;
When rage and jealousy consell'd me to kill him,
Which then I could have done with much more ease,
Than now, in fear to grieve you, I dare speak it,
Love, seconded with duty, boldly told me
That man I hated, fair Cleora favour'd :
And that was his protection. [CLEORA *bows.*

TIMAND. : See, she bows
Her head in sign of thankfulness.

MAR. : He removed by
The occasion of the war, (my fires increasing
By being closed and stopp'd up,) frantic affection
Prompted me to do something in his absence,
That might deliver you into my power,
Which you see is effected : and, even now,
When my rebellious passions chide my dulness,
And tell me how much I abuse my fortunes,
Now it is in my power to bear you hence. [CLEORA *starts.*
Or take my wishes here, (nay, fear not, madam,
True love's a servant, brutish lust a tyrant,)
I dare not touch those viands that ne'er taste well,
But when they're freely offer'd : only thus much,
Be pleased I may speak in my own dear cause,
And think it worthy your consideration,
(I have loved truly, cannot say deserved,
Since duty must not take the name of merit,)
That I so far prize your content, before
All blessings that my hope can fashion to me,
That willingly I entertain despair,
And, for your sake, embrace it : for I know,
This opportunity lost, by no endeavour
The like can be recover'd. To conclude,
Forget not, that I lose myself to save you :
For what can I expect but death and torture,
The war being ended ? and, what is a task
Would trouble Hercules to undertake,
I do deny you to myself, to give you,
A pure unspotted present, to my rival.
I have said : If it distaste not, best of virgins,
Reward my temperance with some lawful favour,
Though you contemn my person.

[CLEORA *kneels, then pulls off her glove, and offers her hand to* MARULLO.

TIMAND. : See, she kneels ;
And seems to call upon the gods to pay
The debt she owes your virtue : to perform which,
As a sure pledge of friendship, she vouchsafes you
Her fair right hand.

MAR. : I am paid for all my sufferings.
Now, when you please, pass to your private chamber :
My love and duty, faithful guards, shall keep you
From all disturbance ; and when you are sated

With thinking of Leosthenes, as a fee
Due to my service, spare one sigh for me.
[*Exeunt.* CLEORA *makes a low courtesy as she goes off.*

SCENE III.—*The same. A Room in* CLEON'S *House.*

Enter GRACCULO, *leading* ASOTUS *in an ape's habit, with a chain about his neck* ZANTHIA *in* CORISCA'S *clothes, she bearing up her train.*

GRAC. : Come on, sir.
ASOT. : Oh !
GRAC. : Do you grumble ? you were ever
A brainless ass ; but if this hold, I'll teach you
To come aloft and do tricks like an ape.
Your morning's lesson : if you miss——
ASOT. : O no, sir.
GRAC. : What for the Carthaginians ? [ASOTUS *makes moppes.*) A good beast.
What for yourself, your lord ? (*Dances.*) Exceeding well.
There's your reward. (*Gives him an apple.*)—Not kiss your paw ! So, so, so.
ZANT. : Was ever lady, the first day of her honour,
So waited on by a wrinkled crone ? She looks now,
Without her painting, curling, and perfumes,
Like the last day of January ; and stinks worse
Than a hot brache in the dogdays. Further off !
So—stand there like an image ; if you stir,
Till, with a quarter of a look, I call you,
You know what follows.
CORIS. : O, what am I fallen to !
But 'tis a punishment for my lust and pride,
Justly return'd upon me.
GRAC. : How dost thou like
Thy ladyship, Zanthia ?
ZANT. : Very well ; and bear it
With as much state as your lordship.
GRAC. : Give me thy hand :
Let us, like conquering Romans, walk in triumph,
Our captives following ; then mount our tribunals,
And make the slaves our footstools.
ZANT. : Fine, by Jove !
Are your hands clean, minion ?
CORIS. : Yes, forsooth.
ZANT. : Fall off then.
So ! now come on ; and having made your three duties——
Down, I say—are you stiff in the hams ?—now kneel,
And tie our shoe : now kiss it, and be happy.
GRAC. : This is state, indeed !
ZANT. : It is such as she taught me ;
A tickling itch of greatness, your proud ladies
Expect from their poor waiters : we have changed parts ;
She does what she forced me to do in her reign,
And I must practise it in mine.
GRAC. : 'Tis justice :
O ! here come more.

Enter CIMBRIO, CLEON, POLIPHRON, *and* OLYMPIA.

CIMB. : Discover to a drachma,
Or I will famish thee.
CLEON. : O ! I am pined already.
CIMB. : Hunger shall force thee to cut off the brawns
From thy arms and thighs, then broil them on the coals
For carbonadoes.
POLIPH. : Spare the old jade, he's founder'd.
GRAC. : Cut his throat then,
And hang him out for a scarecrow.
POLIPH. : You have all your wishes
In your revenge, and I have mine. You see
I use no tyranny : when I was her slave,
She kept me as a sinner, to lie at her back
In frosty nights, and fed me high with dainties,
Which still she had in her belly again ere morning ;
And in requital of those courtesies,
Having made one another free, we are married :
And, if you wish us joy, join with us in
A dance at our wedding.
GRAC. : Agreed ; for I have thought of
A most triumphant one, which shall express
We are lords, and these our slaves.
POLIPH. : But we shall want
A woman.
GRAC. : No, here's Jane-of-apes shall serve ;
Carry your body swimming.—Where's the music ?
POLIPH. : I have placed it in yon window.
GRAC. : Begin then sprightly.

[*Music and then a dance.*

Enter MARULLO *behind.*

POLIPH. : Well done on all sides ! I have prepared a banquet ;
Let's drink and cool us.
GRAC. : A good motion.
CIMB. : Wait here ;
You have been tired with feasting, learn to fast now.
GRAC. : I'll have an apple for jack, and may be some scraps
May fall to your share.

[*Exeunt* GRAC., ZANT., CIMB., POLIPH., *and* OLYMP.

CORIS. : Whom can we accuse
But ourselves, for what we suffer ? Thou art just,
Thou all-creating Power ! and misery
Instructs me now, that yesterday acknowledged
No deity beyond my lust and pride,
There is a heaven above us, that looks down
With the eyes of justice, upon such as number
Those blessings freely given, in the accompt
Of their poor merits : else it could not be,
Now miserable I, to please whose palate
The elements were ransack'd, yet complain'd
Of nature, as not liberal enough
In her provision of rarities

To sooth my taste, and pamper my proud flesh,
Should wish in vain for bread.

CLEON. : Yes, I do wish too,
For what I fed my dogs with.

CORIS. : I, that forgot
I was made of flesh and blood, and thought the silk
Spun by the diligent worm out of their entrails,
Too coarse to clothe me, and the softest down
Too hard to sleep on ; that disdain'd to look
On virtue being in rags, that stopp'd my nose
At those that did not use adulterate arts
To better nature ; that from those that served me
Expected adoration, am made justly
The scorn of my own bondwoman.

ASOT. : I am punish'd,
For seeking to cuckold mine own natural father :
Had I been gelded then, or used myself
Like a man, I had not been transform'd, and forced
To play an overgrown ape.

CLEON. : I know I cannot
Last long, that's all my comfort. Come, I forgive both :
'Tis in vain to be angry ; let us, therefore,
Lament together like friends.

MAR. : What a true mirror
Were this sad spectacle for secure greatness !
Here they, that never see themselves, but in
The glass of servile flattery, might behold
The weak foundation upon which they build
Their trust in human frailty. Happy are those,
That knowing, in their births, they are subject to
Uncertain change, are still prepared, and arm'd
For either fortune : a rare principle.
And with much labour, learn'd in wisdom's school !
For, as these bondmen, by their actions, shew
That their prosperity, like too large a sail
For their small bark of judgment, sinks them with
A fore-right gale of liberty, ere they reach
The port they long to touch at : so these wretches,
Swollen with the false opinion of their worth,
And proud of blessings left them, not acquired ;
That did believe they could with giant arms
Fathom the earth, and were above their fates,
Those borrow'd helps, that did support them, vanish'd,
Fall of themselves, and by unmanly suffering,
Betray their proper weakness, and make known
Their boasted greatness was lent, not their own.

CLEON. : O for some meat ! they sit long.

CORIS. : We forgot,
When we drew out intemperate feasts till midnight ;
Their hunger was not thought on, nor the watchings ;
Nor did we hold ourselves served to the height,
But when we did exact and force their duties
Beyond their strength and power.

ASOT. : We pay for't now :
I now could be content to have my head
Broke with a rib of beef, or, for a coffin,
Be buried in the dripping-pan.

nter POLIPHRON, CIMBRIO, GRACCULO, ZANTHIA, *and* OLYMPIA, *drunk and quarrelling.*

CIMB. : Do not hold me :
Not kiss the bride !
POLIPH. : No, sir.
CIMB. : She's common good,
And so we'll use her.
GRAC. : We'll have nothing private.
MAR. (*coming forward*) : Hold !
ZANT. : Here's Marullo.
OLYMP. : He's your chief.
CIMB. : We are equals ;
I will know no obedience.
GRAC. : Nor superior——
Nay, if you are lion drunk, I will make one ;
For lightly ever he that parts the fray,
Goes away with the blows.
MAR. : Art thou mad too ?
No more, as you respect me.
POLIPH. : I obey, sir.
MAR. : Quarrel among yourselves !
CIMB. : Yes, in our wine, sir,
And for our wenches.
GRAC. : How could we be lords else ?
MAR. : Take heed ; I've news will cool this heat, and make you
Remember what you were.
CIMB. : How !
MAR. : Send off these,
And then I'll tell you. [ZANTHIA *beats* CORISCA.
OLYMP. : This is tyranny,
Now she offends not.
ZANT. : 'Tis for exercise,
And to help digestion. What is she good for else ?
To me, it was her language.
MAR. : Lead her off.
And take heed, madam minx, the wheel may turn.
Go to your meat, and rest ; and from this hour
Remember, he that is a lord to-day,
May be a slave to-morrow.
CLEON. : Good morality !

[*Exeunt* CLEON, ASOT., ZANT., OLYMP., *and* CORIS.

CIMB. : But what would you impart ?
MAR. : What must invite you
To stand upon your guard, and leave your feasting ;
Or but imagine what it is to be
Most miserable, and rest assured you are so.
Our masters are victorious.
ALL : How !

MAR. : Within
A day's march of the city, flesh'd with spoil,
And proud of conquest ; the armado sunk,
The Carthaginian admiral, hand to hand,
Slain by Leosthenes.
CIMB. : I feel the whip
Upon my back already.
GRAC. : Every man
Seek a convenient tree, and hang himself.
POLIPH. : Better die once, than live an age to suffer
New tortures every hour.
CIMB. : Say, we submit,
And yield us to their mercy ?——
MAR. : Can you flatter
Yourselves with such false hopes ? Or dare you think
That your imperious lords, that never fail'd
To punish with severity petty slips
In your neglect of labour, may be won
To pardon those licentious outrages
Which noble enemies forbear to practise
Upon the conquer'd ? What have you omitted,
That may call on their just revenge with horror,
And studied cruelty ? we have gone too far
To think now of retiring ; in our courage,
And daring, lies our safety : if you are not
Slaves in your abject minds, as in your fortunes,
Since to die is the worst, better expose
Our naked breasts to their keen swords, and sell
Our lives with the most advantage, than to trust
In a forestall'd remission, or yield up
Our bodies to the furnace of their fury,
Thrice heated with revenge.
GRAC. : You led us on.
CIMB. : And 'tis but justice you should bring us off.
GRAC. : And we expect it.
MAR. : Hear then, and obey me ;
And I will either save you, or fall with you.
Man the walls strongly, and make good the ports ;
Boldly deny their entrance, and rip up
Your grievances, and what compell'd you to
This desperate course : if they disdain to hear
Of composition, we have in our powers
Their aged fathers, children, and their wives.
Who, to preserve themselves, must willingly
Make intercession for us. 'Tis not time now
To talk, but do : a glorious end, or freedom,
Is now proposed us ; stand resolved for either,
And, like good fellows, live or die together. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The Country near Syracuse. The Camp of* TIMOLEON.

Enter LEOSTHENES *and* TIMAGORAS.

TIMAG. : I am so far from envy, I am proud
You have outstripp'd me in the race of honour.
O 'twas a glorious day, and bravely won !

Your bold performance gave such lustre to
Timoleon's wise directions, as the army
Rests doubtful, to whom they stand most engaged
For their so great success.

LEOST. : The gods first honour'd,
The glory be the general's ; 'tis far from me
To be his rival.

TIMAG. : You abuse your fortune,
To entertain her choice and gracious favours
With a contracted brow ; plumed Victory
Is truly painted with a cheerful look,
Equally distant from proud insolence,
And base dejection.

LEOST. : O, Timagoras,
You are only acquainted with the cause
That loads my sad heart with a hill of lead ;
Whose ponderous weight, neither my newgot honour,
Assisted by the general applause
The soldier crowns it with, nor all war's glories,
Can lessen or remove : and, would you please,
With fit consideration, to remember
How much I wrong'd Cleora's innocence
With my rash doubts ; and what a grievous penance
She did impose upon her tender sweetness,
To pluck away the vulture, jealousy,
That fed upon my liver ; you cannot blame me,
But call it a fit justice on myself,
Though I resolve to be a stranger to
The thought of mirth or pleasure.

TIMAG. : You have redeem'd
The forfeit of your fault with such a ransom
Of honourable action, as my sister
Must of necessity confess her sufferings,
Weigh'd down by your fair merits ; and, when she views you,
Like a triumphant conqueror, carried through
The streets of Syracusa, the glad people
Pressing to meet you, and the senators
Contending who shall heap most honours on you ;
The oxen, crown'd with garlands, led before you,
Appointed for the sacrifice ; and the altars
Smoaking with thankful incense to the gods :
The soldiers chanting loud hymns to your praise,
The windows fill'd with matrons and with virgins,
Throwing upon your head, as you pass by,
The choicest flowers, and silently invoking
The queen of love, with their particular vows,
To be thought worthy of you ; can Cleora
(Though, in the glass of self-love, she behold
Her best deserts) but with all joy acknowledge,
What she endured was but a noble trial
You made of her affection ? and her anger,
Rising from your too amorous cares, soon drench'd
In Lethe, and forgotten.

LEOST. : If those glories
You so set forth were mine, they might plead for me ;
But I can lay no claim to the least honour
Which you, with foul injustice, ravish from her.
Her beauty in me wrought a miracle,
Taught me to aim at things beyond my power,
Which her perfections purchased, and gave to me
From her free bounties ; she inspired me with
That valour which I dare not call mine own ;
And, from the fair reflexion of her mind,
My soul received the sparkling beams of courage.
She, from the magazine of her proper goodness,
Stock'd me with virtuous purposes ; sent me forth
To trade for honour ; and, she being the owner
Of the bark of my adventures, I must yield her
A just account of all, as fits a factor.
And, howsoever others think me happy,
And cry aloud, I have made a prosperous voyage ;
One frown of her dislike at my return,
Which, as a punishment for my fault, I look for,
Strikes dead all comfort.
TIMAG. : Tush ! these fears are needless ;
She cannot, must not, shall not, be so cruel.
A free confession of a fault wins pardon,
But, being seconded by desert, commands it.
The general is your own, and, sure, my father
Repents his harshness ; for myself, I am
Ever your creature,—One day shall be happy
In your triumph, and your marriage.
LEOST. : May it prove so,
With her consent and pardon.
TIMAG. : Ever touching
On that harsh string ! She is your own, and you
Without disturbance seize on what's your due. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*Syracuse. A Room in* ARCHIDAMUS's *House.*

Enter MARULLO *and* TIMANDRA.

MAR. : She has her health, then ?
TIMAND. : Yes, sir ; and as often
As I speak of you, lends attentive ear
To all that I deliver ; nor seems tired,
Though I dwell long on the relation of
Your sufferings for her, heaping praise on praise
On your unequall'd temperance, and command
You hold o'er your affections.
MAR. : To my wish :
Have you acquainted her with the defeature
Of the Carthaginians, and with what honours
Leosthenes comes crown'd home with ?
TIMAND. : With all care.
MAR. : And how does she receive it ?
TIMAND. : As I guess,
With a seeming kind of joy ; but yet appears not

Transported, or proud of his happy fortune.
But when I tell her of the certain ruin
You must encounter with at their arrival
In Syracusa, and that death, with torments,
Must fall upon you, which you yet repent not,
Esteeming it a glorious martyrdom,
And a reward of pure unspotted love,
Preserved in the white robe of innocence,
Though she were in your power ; and, still spurr'd on
By insolent lust, you rather chose to suffer
The fruit untasted, for whose glad possession
You have call'd on the fury of your lord,
Than that she should be grieved, or tainted in
Her reputation——

MAR. : Doth it work compunction ?
Pities she my misfortune ?

TIMAND. : She express'd
All signs of sorrow which, her vow observed,
Could witness a grieved heart. At the first hearing,
She fell upon her face, rent her fair hair,
Her hands held up to heaven, and vented sighs,
In which she silently seemed to complain
Of heaven's injustice.

MAR. : 'Tis enough : wait carefully,
And, on all watched occasions, continue
Speech and discourse of me : 'tis time must work her.

TIMAND. : I'll not be wanting, but still strive to serve you. [*Exit.*

Enter POLIPHRON.

MAR. : Now, Poliphron, the news ?

POLIPH. : The conquering army
Is within ken.

MAR. : How brook the slaves the object ?

POLIPH. : Cheerfully yet ; they do refuse no labour,
And seem to scoff at danger ; 'tis your presence
That must confirm them : with a full consent
You are chosen to relate the tyranny
Of our proud masters ; and what you subscribe to,
They gladly will allow of, or hold out
To the last man.

MAR. : I'll instantly among them.
If we prove constant to ourselves, good fortune
Will not, I hope, forsake us.

POLIPH. : 'Tis our best refuge. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Before the Walls of Syracuse.*

Enter TIMOLEON, ARCHIDAMUS, DIPHILUS, LEOSTHENES, TIMAGORAS, *and* SOLDIERS.

TIMOL. : Thus far we are return'd victorious ; crown'd
With wreaths triumphant, (famine, blood, and death,
Banish'd your peaceful confines,) and bring home
Security and peace. 'Tis therefore fit
That such as boldly stood the shock of war,
And with the dear expense of sweat and blood

Have purchased honour, should with pleasure reap
The harvest of their toil : and we stand bound,
Out of the first file of the best deservers,
(Though all must be considered to their merits,)
To think of you, Leosthenes, that stand,
And worthily, most dear in our esteem,
For your heroic valour.

ARCHID. : When I look on
The labour of so many men and ages,
This well-built city, not long since design'd
To spoil and rapine, by the favour of
The gods, and you, their ministers, preserved,
I cannot, in my height of joy, but offer
These tears for a glad sacrifice.

DIPH. : Sleep the citizens ?
Or are they overwhelm'd with the excess
Of comfort that flows to them ?

LEOST. : We receive
A silent entertainment.

TIMAG. : I long since
Expected that the virgins and the matrons,
The old men striving with their age, the priests,
Carrying the images of their gods before them,
Should have met us with procession.—Ha ! the gates
Are shut against us !

ARCHID. : And, upon the walls,
Arm'd men seem to defy us !

Enter above, on the Walls, MARULLO, POLIPHRON, CIMBRIO, GRACCULO, *and other* SLAVES.

DIPH. : I should know
These faces : they are our slaves.

TIMAG. : The mystery, rascals !
Open the ports, and play not with an anger
That will consume you.

TIMOL. : This is above wonder.

ARCHID. : Our bondmen stand against us !

GRAC. : Some such things
We were in man's remembrance. The slaves are turn'd
Lords of the town, or so—nay, be not angry :
Perhaps, upon good terms, giving security
You will be quiet men, we may allow you
Some lodgings in our garrets or outhouses :
Your great looks cannot carry it.

CIMB. : The truth is,
We've been bold with your wives, toy'd with your daughters——

LEOST. : O my prophetic soul !

GRAC. : Rifled your chests,
Been busy with your wardrobes.

TIMAG. : Can we endure this ?

LEOST. : O my Cleora !

GRAC. : A caudle for the gentleman ;
He'll die o' the pip else.

TIMAG. : Scorn'd too ! are you turn'd stone ?
Hold parley with our bondmen ! force our entrance,
Then, villains, expect——
TIMOL. : Hold ! You wear men's shapes,
And if, like men, you have reason, shew a cause
That leads you to this desperate course, which must end
In your destruction.
GRAC. : That, as please the Fates ;
But we vouchsafe——Speak, captain,
TIMAG. : Hell and furies !
ARCHID. : Bay'd by our own curs !
CIMB. : Take heed you be not worried.
POLIPH. : We are sharp set.
CIMB. : And sudden.
MAR. : Briefly thus, then,
Since I must speak for all—Your tyranny
Drew us from our obedience. Happy those times
When lords were styled fathers of families,
And not imperious masters ! when they number'd
Their servants almost equal with their sons,
Or one degree beneath them ! when their labours
Were cherish'd and rewarded, and a period
Set to their sufferings ; when they did not press
Their duties or their wills, beyond the power
And strength of their performance ! all things order'd
With such decorum, as wise lawmakers,
From each well-govern'd private house derived
The perfect model of a commonwealth.
Humanity then lodged in the hearts of men,
And thankful masters carefully provided
For creatures wanting reason. The noble horse,
That, in his fiery youth, from his wide nostrils
Neigh'd courage to his rider, and brake through
Groves of opposed pikes, bearing his lord
Safe to triumphant victory ; old or wounded,
Was set at liberty, and freed from service.
The Athenian mules, that from the quarry drew
Marble, hew'd for the temples of the gods,
The great work ended, were dismiss'd, and fed
At the public cost ; nay, faithful dogs have found
Their sepulchres ; but man, to man more cruel,
Appoints no end to the sufferings of his slave ;
Since pride stepp'd in and riot, and o'erturn'd
This goodly frame of concord, teaching masters
To glory in the abuse of such as are
Brought under their command ; who, grown unuseful,
Are less esteem'd than beasts.—This you have practised,
Practised on us with rigour ; this hath forced us
To shake our heavy yokes off ; and, if redress
Of these just grievances be not granted us,
We'll right ourselves, and by strong hand defend
What we are now possess'd of.
GRAC. : And not leave
One house unfired.

CIMB. : Or throat uncut of those
We have in our power.
POLIPH. : Nor will we fall alone ;
You shall buy us dearly.
TIMAG. : O the gods !
Unheard-of insolence !
TIMOL. : What are your demands ?
MAR. : A general pardon first, for all offences
Committed in your absence. Liberty
To all such as desire to make return
Into their countries ; and, to those that stay,
A competence of land freely allotted
To each man's proper use, no lord acknowledged :
Lastly, with your consent, to choose them wives
Out of your families.
TIMAG. : Let the city sink first.
LEOST. : And ruin seize on all, ere we subscribe
To such conditions.
ARCHID. : Carthage, though victorious,
Could not have forced more from us.
LEOST. : Scale the walls ;
Capitulate after.
TIMOL. : He that wins the top first,
Shall wear a mural wreath. [*Exeunt.*
MAR. : Each to his place. [*Flourish and alarms.*
Or death or victory ! Charge them home, and fear not.
[*Exeunt* MARULLO *and* SLAVES.

Re-enter TIMOLEON, ARCHIDAMUS, *and* SENATORS.

TIMOL. : We wrong ourselves, and we are justly punish'd,
To deal with bondmen, as if we encounter'd
An equal enemy.
ARCHID. : They fight like devils ;
And run upon our swords, as if their breasts
Were proof beyond their armour.

Re-enter LEOSTHENES *and* TIMAGORAS.

TIMAG. : Make a firm stand.
The slaves, not satisfied they have beat us off,
Prepare to sally forth.
TIMOL. : They are wild beasts,
And to be tamed by policy. Each man take
A tough whip in his hand, such as you used
To punish them with, as masters : in your looks
Carry severity and awe : 'twill fright them
More than your weapons. Savage lions fly from
The sight of fire ; and these, that have forgot
That duty you ne'er taught them with your swords,
When, unexpected, they behold those terrors
Advanced aloft, that they were made to shake at,
'Twill force them to remember what they are,
And stoop to due obedience.
ARCHID. : Here they come.

Enter, from the City, CIMBRIO, GRACCULO, *and other* SLAVES.

CIMB. : Leave not a man alive ; a wound's but a flea-biting,
To what we suffer'd, being slaves.

GRAC. : O, my heart !
Cimbrio, what do we see ? the whip ! our masters !
TIMAG. : Dare you rebel, slaves !
[*The* SENATORS *shake their whips, the* SLAVES *throw away their weapons, and run off.*
CIMB. : Mercy ! mercy ! where
Shall we hide us from their fury ?
GRAC. : Fly, they follow.
O, we shall be tormented !
TIMOL. : Enter with them,
But yet forbear to kill them : still remember
They are part of your wealth ; and being disarm'd,
There is no danger.
ARCHID. : Let us first deliver
Such as they have in fetters, and at leisure
Determine of their punishment.
LEOST. : Friend, to you
I leave the disposition of what's mine :
I cannot think I am safe without your sister.
She is only worth my thought ; and, till I see
What she has suffer'd, I am on the rack,
And Furies my tormentors. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Syracuse. A Room in* ARCHIDAMUS's *House.*

Enter MARULLO *and* TIMANDRA.

MAR. : I know I am pursued ; nor would I fly
Although the ports were open, and a convoy
Ready to bring me off : the baseness of
These villains, from the pride of all my hopes,
Hath thrown me to the bottomless abyss
Of horror and despair : had they stood firm,
I could have bought Cleora's free consent
With the safety of her father's life, and brother's ;
And forced Leosthenes to quit his claim,
And kneel a suitor for me.
TIMAND. : You must not think
What might have been, but what must now be practised,
And suddenly resolve.
MAR. : All my poor fortunes
Are at the stake, and I must run the hazard.
Unseen, convey me to Cleora's chamber ;
For in her sight, if it were possible,
I would be apprehended : do not enquire
The reason why, but help me. [*Knocking within.*
TIMAND. : Make haste,—one knocks. [*Exit* MARULLO.
Jove turn all to the best !

Enter LEOSTHENES.

You are welcome, sir.
LEOST. : Thou giv'st it in a heavy tone.
TIMAND. : Alas ! sir,
We have so long fed on the bread of sorrow,
Drinking the bitter water of afflictions,
Made loathsome too by our continued fears,
Comfort's a stranger to us.

LEOST. : Fears ! your sufferings :——
For which I am so overgone with grief,
I dare not ask, without compassionate tears,
The villain's name that robbed thee of thy honour :
For being train'd up in chastity's cold school,
And taught by such a mistress as Cleora,
'Twere impious in me to think Timandra
Fell with her own consent.
TIMAND. : How mean you, fell, sir ?
I understand you not.
LEOST. : I would thou did'st not,
Or that I could not read upon thy face,
In blushing characters, the story of
Libidinous rape : confess it, for you stand not
Accountable for a sin, against whose strength
Your o'ermatched innocence could make no resistance ;
Under which odds, I know, Cleora fell too,
Heaven's help in vain invoked ; the amazed sun
Hiding his face behind a mask of clouds,
Nor daring to look on it ! In her sufferings
All sorrow's comprehended : what Timandra,
Or the city, has endured, her loss consider'd,
Deserves not to be named.
TIMAND. : Pray you, do not bring, sir,
In the chimeras of your jealous fears,
New monsters to affright us.
LEOST. : O, Timandra,
That I had faith enough but to believe thee !
I should receive it with a joy beyond
Assurance of Elysian shades hereafter,
Or all the blessings, in this life, a mother
Could wish her children crown'd with—but I must not
Credit impossibilities ; yet I strive
To find out that whose knowledge is a curse,
And ignorance a blessing. Come, discover
What kind of look he had that forced thy lady,
(Thy ravisher I will enquire at leisure.)
That when, hereafter, I behold a stranger,
But near to him in aspect, I may conclude,
Though men and angels should proclaim him honest,
He is a hell bred villain.
TIMAND. : You are unworthy
To know she is preserved, preserved untainted :
Sorrow, but ill bestow'd, hath only made
A rape upon her comforts in your absence.
Come forth, dear madam. [*Leads in* CLEORA.
LEOST. : Ha ! [*Kneels.*
TIMAND. : Nay, she deserves
The bending of your heart ; that, to content you,
Has kept a vow, the breach of which a Vestal,
Though the infringing it had call'd upon her
A living funeral, must of force have shrunk at.
No danger could compel her to dispense with
Her cruel penance, though hot lust came arm'd

To seize upon her ; when one look or accent
Might have redeem'd her.
LEOST. : Might ! O do not shew me
A beam of comfort, and straight take it from me.
The means by which she was freed ? speak, O speak quickly ;
Each minute of delay's an age of torment ;
O speak, Timandra.
TIMAND. : Free her from her oath ;
Herself can best deliver it.
LEOST. : O blest office ! [*Unbinds her eyes.*
Never did galley-slave shake off his chains,
Or look'd on his redemption from the oar,
With such true feeling of delight, as now
I find myself possess'd of.—Now I behold
True light indeed ; for, since these fairest stars,
Cover'd with clouds of your determinate will,
Denied their influence to my optic sense,
The splendour of the sun appear'd to me
But as some little glimpse of his bright beams
Convey'd into a dungeon, to remember
The dark inhabitants there, how much they wanted.
Open these long shut lips, and strike mine ears
With music more harmonious than the spheres
Yield in their heavenly motions : and if ever
A true submission for a crime acknowledged,
May find a gracious hearing, teach your tongue,
In the first sweet articulate sounds it utters,
To sign my wish'd-for pardon.
CLEO. : I forgive you.
LEOST. : How greedily I receive this ! Stay, best lady,
And let me by degrees ascend the height
Of human happiness ! all at once deliver'd,
The torrent of my joys will overwhelm me :—
So ! now a little more ; and pray excuse me,
If, like a wanton epicure, I desire
The pleasant taste these cates of comfort yield me,
Should not too soon be swallow'd. Have you not,
By your unspotted truth I do conjure you
To answer truly, suffer'd in your honour,
By force, I mean, for in your will I free you,
Since I left Syracusa ?
CLEO. : I restore
This kiss, so help me goodness ! which I borrow'd,
When I last saw you.
LEOST. : Miracle of virtue !
One pause more, I beseech you : I am like
A man whose vital spirits consumed and wasted
With a long and tedious fever, unto whom
Too much of a strong cordial, at once taken,
Brings death, and not restores him. Yet I cannot
Fix here ; but must enquire the man to whom
I stand indebted for a benefit,
Which to requite at full, though in this hand
I grasp all sceptres the world's empire bows to,

Would leave me a poor bankrupt. Name him, lady ;
If of a mean estate, I'll gladly part with
My utmost fortunes to him ; but if noble,
In thankful duty study how to serve him ;
Or if of higher rank, erect him altars,
And as a god adore him.

CLEO. : If that goodness,
And noble temperance, the queen of virtues,
Bridling rebellious passions, to whose sway,
Such as have conquer'd nations have lived slaves,
Did ever wing great minds to fly to heaven,
He, that preserved mine honour, may hope boldly
To fill a seat among the gods, and shake off
Our frail corruption.

LEOST. : Forward.

CLEO. : Or if ever
The Powers above did mask in human shapes,
To teach mortality, not by cold precepts
Forgot as soon as told, but by examples,
To imitate their pureness, and draw near
To their celestial natures, I believe
He's more than man.

LEOST. : You do describe a wonder.

CLEO. : Which will encrease, when you shall understand.
He was a lover.

LEOST. : Not yours, lady ?

CLEO. : Yes ;
Loved me, Leosthenes ; nay, more, so doted,
(If e'er affections scorning gross desires
May without wrong be styled so,) that he durst not,
With an immodest syllable or look,
In fear it might take from me, whom he made
The object of his better part, discover
I was the saint he sued to.

LEOST. : A rare temper !

CLEO. : I cannot speak it to the worth : all praise
I can bestow upon it will appear
Envious detraction. Not to rack you further,
Yet make the miracle full, though, of all men,
He hated you, Leosthenes, as his rival,
So high yet he prized my content, that, knowing
You were a man I favour'd, he disdain'd not,
Against himself, to serve you.

LEOST. : You conceal still
The owner of these excellencies.

CLEO. : 'Tis Marullo,
My father's bondman.

LEOST. : Ha, ha, ha !

CLEO. : Why do you laugh ?

LEOST. : To hear the labouring mountain of your praise
Deliver'd of a mouse.

CLEO. : The man deserves not
This scorn, I can assure you.

LEOST. : Do you call
What was his duty, merit?
CLEO. : Yes, and place it
As high in my esteem, as all the honours
Descended from your ancestors, or the glory,
Which you may call your own, got in this action,
In which, I must confess, you have done nobly;
And I could add, as I desired, but that
I fear 'twould make you proud.
LEOST. : Why, lady, can you
Be won to give allowance, that your slave
Should dare to love you?
CLEO. : The immortal gods
Accept the meanest altars, that are raised
By pure devotions; and sometimes prefer
An ounce of frankincense, honey or milk,
Before whole hecatombs, or Sabæan gums,
Offer'd in ostentation.—Are you sick
Of your old disease? I'll fit you. [*Aside.*
LEOST. : You seem moved.
CLEO. : Zealous, I grant, in the defence of virtue.
Why, good Leosthenes, though I endured
A penance for your sake, above example;
I have not so far sold myself, I take it,
To be at your devotion, but I may
Cherish desert in others, where I find it.
How would you tyrannize, if you stood possess'd of
That which is only yours in expectation,
That now prescribe such hard conditions to me?
LEOST. : One kiss, and I am silenced.
CLEO. : I vouchsafe it;
Yet, I must tell you 'tis a favour that
Marullo, when I was his, not mine own,
Durst not presume to ask: no; when the city
Bow'd humbly to licentious rapes and lust,
And when I was, of men and gods forsaken,
Deliver'd to his power, he did not press me
To grace him with one look or syllable,
Or urged the dispensation of an oath
Made for your satisfaction:—the poor wretch,
Having related only his own sufferings,
And kiss'd my hand, which I could not deny him,
Defending me from others, never since
Solicited my favours.
LEOST. : Pray you, end:
The story does not please me.
CLEO. : Well, take heed
Of doubts and fears:—for know, Leosthenes,
A greater injury cannot be offer'd
To innocent chastity, than unjust suspicion.
I love Marullo's fair mind, not his person;
Let that secure you. And I here command you,
If I have any power in you, to stand
Between him and all punishment, and oppose

His temperance to his folly ; if you fail——
No more ; I will not threaten. [*Exit.*

LEOST. : What a bridge
Of glass I walk upon, over a river
Of certain ruin, mine own weighty fears
Cracking what should support me ! and those helps,
Which confidence lends to others, are from me
Ravish'd by doubts, and wilful jealousy. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*Another Room in the same.*

Enter TIMAGORAS, CLEON, ASOTUS, CORISCA, *and* OLYMPIA.

CLEON. : But are you sure we are safe ?
TIMAG. : You need not fear ;
They are all under guard, their fangs pared off :
The wounds their insolence gave you, to be cured
With the balm of your revenge.
ASOT. : And shall I be
The thing I was born, my lord ?
TIMAG. : The same wise thing.
'Slight, what a beast they have made thee !
Africk never
Produced the like.
ASOT. : I think so :—nor the land
Where apes and monkeys grow, like crabs and walnuts,
On the same tree. Not all the catalogue
Of conjurers or wise women bound together
Could have so soon transform'd me, as my rascal
Did with his whip ; for not in outside only,
But in my own belief, I thought myself
As perfect a baboon——
TIMAG. : An ass thou wert ever.
ASOT. : And would have given one leg, with all my heart.
For good security to have been a man
After three lives, or one and twenty years,
Though I had died on crutches.
CLEON. : Never varlets
So triumph'd o'er an old fat man : I was famish'd.
TIMAG. : Indeed you are fallen away.
ASOT. : Three years of feeding
On cullises and jelly, though his cooks
Lard all he eats with marrow, or his doctors
Pour in his mouth restoratives as he sleeps,
Will not recover him.
TIMAG. : But your ladyship looks
Sad on the matter, as if you had miss'd
Your ten-crown amber possets, good to smooth
The cutis, as you call it, and prepare you
Active, and high, for an afternoon's encounter
With a rough gamester, on your couch. Fie on't !
You are grown thrifty, smell like other women ;
The college of physicians have not sat,
And they were used, in counsel, how to fill
The crannies in your cheeks, or raise a rampire

With mummy, ceruses, or infants' fat,
To keep off age and time.
CORIS. : Pray you, forbear ;
I am an alter'd woman.
TIMAG. : So it seems ;
A part of your honour's ruff stands out of rank too.
CORIS. : No matter, I have other thoughts.
TIMAG. : O strange !
Not ten days since it would have vex'd you more
Than the loss of your good name : pity, this cure
For your proud itch came no sooner ! Marry, Olympia
Seems to bear up still.
OLYMP. : I complain not, sir ;
I have borne my fortune patiently.
TIMAG. : Thou wert ever
An excellent bearer ; so is all your tribe,
If you may choose your carriage.

Enter LEOSTHENES *and* DIPHILUS *with a* GUARD.

How now, friend !
Looks our Cleora lovely ?
LEOST. : In my thought, sir.
TIMAG. : But why this guard ?
DIPH. : It is Timoleon's pleasure :
The slaves have been examin'd, and confess
Their riot took beginning from your house ;
And the first mover of them to rebellion,
Your slave Marullo. [*Exeunt* DIPH. *and* GUARD.
LEOST. : Ha ! I more than fear.
TIMAG. : They may search boldly.

Enter TIMANDRA, *speaking to the* GUARD *within.*

TIMAND. : You are unmanner'd grooms,
To pry into my lady's private lodgings ;
There's no Marullos there.

Re-enter DIPHILUS, *and* GUARD *with* MARULLO.

TIMAG. : Now I suspect too.
Where found you him ?
DIPH. : Close hid in your sister's chamber.
TIMAG. : Is that the villain's sanctuary ?
LEOST. : This confirms
All she deliver'd, false.
TIMAG. : But that I scorn
To rust my good sword in thy slavish blood,
Thou now wert dead.
MAR. : He's more a slave than fortune
Or misery can make me, that insults
Upon unweapon'd innocence.
TIMAG. : Prate you, dog!
MAR. : Curs snap at lions in the toil, whose looks
Frighted them, being free.
TIMAG. : As a wild beast,
Drive him before you.
MAR. : O divine Cleora !

LEOST. : Dar'st thou presume to name her ?
MAR. : Yes, and love her ;
And may say, have deserved her.
TIMAG. : Stop his mouth,
Load him with irons too. [*Exit* GUARD *with* MARULLO.
CLEON. : I am deadly sick
To look on him.
ASOT. : If he get loose, I know it,
I caper like an ape again : I feel
The whip already.
TIMAND. : This goes to my lady. [*Exit.*
TIMAG. : Come, cheer you, sir ; we'll urge his punishment
To the full satisfaction of your anger.
LEOST. : He is not worth my thoughts. No corner left
In all the spacious rooms of my vex'd heart,
But is fill'd with Cleora : and the rape
She has done upon her honour, with my wrong,
The heavy burthen of my sorrow's song. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—*The same. A Room in* ARCHIDAMUS's *House.*

Enter ARCHIDAMUS *and* CLEORA.

ARCHID. : Thou art thine own disposer. Were his honours
And glories centupled, as I must confess,
Leosthenes is most worthy, yet I will not,
However I may counsel, force affection.
CLEO. : It needs not, sir ; I prize him to his worth,
Nay, love him truly ; yet would not live slaved
To his jealous humours : since, by the hopes of heaven,
As I am free from violence, in a thought
I am not guilty.
ARCHID. : 'Tis believed, Cleora ;
And much the rather, our great gods be praised for't !
In that I find, beyond my hopes, no sign
Of riot in my house, but all things order'd,
As if I had been present.
CLEO. : May that move you
To pity poor Marullo !
ARCHID. : 'Tis my purpose
To do him all the good I can, Cleora ;
But this offence, being against the state,
Must have a public trial. In the mean time,
Be careful of yourself, and stand engaged
No further to Leosthenes, than you may
Come off with honour ; for, being once his wife,
You are no more your own, nor mine, but must
Resolve to serve and suffer his commands,
And not dispute them :—ere it be too late,
Consider it duly. I must to the senate. [*Exit.*
CLEO. : I am much distracted : in Leosthenes,
I can find nothing justly to accuse,
But his excess of love, which I have studied
To cure with more than common means ; yet still

It grows upon him. And, if I may call
My sufferings merit, I stand bound to think on
Marullo's dangers—though I save his life,
His love is unrewarded :—I confess,
Both have deserved me ; yet, of course, must be
Unjust to one ; such is my destiny.—

Enter TIMANDRA.

How now ! whence flow these tears ?

TIMAND. : I have met, madam,
An object of such cruelty, as would force
A savage to compassion.

CLEO. : Speak, what is it ?

TIMAND. : Men pity beasts of rapine, if o'ermatch'd,
Though baited for their pleasure ; but these monsters,
Upon a man that can make no resistance,
Are senseless in their tyranny. Let it be granted,
Marullo is a slave, he's still a man ;
A capital offender, yet in justice
Not to be tortured, till the judge pronounce
His punishment.

CLEO. : Where is he ?

TIMAND. : Dragg'd to prison.
With more than barbarous violence ; spurn'd and spit on
By the insulting officers, his hands
Pinion'd behind his back ; loaden with fetters :
Yet, with a saint-like patience, he still offers
His face to their rude buffets.

CLEO. : O my grieved soul !—
By whose command ?

TIMAND. : It seems, my lord your brother's,
For he's a looker-on : and it takes from
Honour'd Leosthenes, to suffer it,
For his respect to you, whose name in vain
The grieved wretch loudly calls on.

CLEO. : By Diana,
'Tis base in both ; and to their teeth I'll tell them
That I am wrong'd in't. [*Going forth.*

TIMAND. : What will you do ?

CLEO. : In person
Visit and comfort him.

TIMAND. : That will bring fuel
To the jealous fires which burn too hot already
In lord Leosthenes.

CLEO. : Let them consume him !
I am mistress of myself. Where cruelty reigns,
There dwells nor love, nor honour. [*Exit.*

TIMAND. : So ! it works.
Though hitherto I have run a desperate course
To serve my brother's purposes, now 'tis fit

Enter LEOSTHENES *and* TIMAGORAS.

I study mine own ends. They come :—assist me
In these my undertakings, Love's great patron,
As my intents are honest !

LEOST. : 'Tis my fault :
Distrust of others springs, Timagoras,
From diffidence in ourselves : but I will strive,
With the assurance of my worth and merits,
To kill this monster, jealousy.

TIMAG. : 'Tis a guest,
In wisdom, never to be entertain'd
On trivial probabilities ; but, when
He does appear in pregnant proofs, not fashion'd
By idle doubts and fears, to be received :
They make their own horns that are too secure,
As well as such as give them growth and being
From mere imagination. Though I prize
Cleora's honour equal with mine own,
And know what large additions of power
This match brings to our family, I prefer
Our friendship, and your peace of mind so far
Above my own respects, or hers, that if
She hold not her true value in the test,
'Tis far from my ambition, for her cure
That you should wound yourself.

TIMAND. : This argues for me. [*Aside.*

TIMAG. : Why she should be so passionate for a bondman,
Falls not in compass of my understanding,
But for some nearer interest : or he raise
This mutiny, if he loved her, as, you say,
She does confess he did, but to enjoy,
By fair or foul play, what he ventured for,
To me's a riddle.

LEOST. : Pray you, no more ; already
I have answered that objection, in my strong
Assurance of her virtue.

TIMAG. : 'Tis unfit then,
That I should press it further.

TIMAND. : Now I must
Make in, or all is lost. [*Rushes forward distractedly.*

TIMAG. : What would Timandra ?

LEOST. : How wild she looks ! How is it with thy lady ?

TIMAG. : Collect thyself, and speak.

TIMAND. : As you are noble,
Have pity, or love piety.—Oh !

LEOST. : Take breath.

TIMAG. : Out with it boldly.

TIMAND. : O, the best of ladies,
I fear, is gone for ever.

LEOST. : Who, Cleora ?

TIMAG. : Deliver, how ? 'Sdeath, be a man, sir !—Speak.

TIMAND. : Take it then in as many sighs as words,
My lady——

TIMAG. : What of her ?

TIMAND. : No sooner heard
Marullo was imprison'd, but she fell
Into a deadly swoon.

TIMAG. : But she recover'd :
Say so, or he will sink too ; hold, sir ; fie !
This is unmanly.
TIMAND. : Brought again to life,
But with much labour, she awhile stood silent,
Yet in that interim vented sighs, as if
They labour'd, from the prison of her flesh,
To give her grieved soul freedom. On the sudden,
Transported on the wings of rage and sorrow,
She flew out of the house, and, unattended,
Entered the common prison.
LEOST. : This confirms
What but before I fear'd.
TIMAND. : There you may find her ;
And, if you love her as a sister——
TIMAG. : Damn her !
TIMAND. : Or you respect her safety as a lover,
Procure Marullo's liberty.
TIMAG. : Impudence
Beyond expression !
LEOST. : Shall I be a bawd
To her lust, and my dishonour ?
TIMAND. : She'll run mad, else,
Or do some violent act upon herself :
My lord, her father, sensible of her sufferings,
Labours to gain his freedom.
LEOST. : O, the devil !
Has she bewitch'd him too ?
TIMAG. : I'll hear no more.
Come, sir, we'll follow her ; and if no persuasion
Can make her take again her natural form,
Which by lust's powerful spell she has cast off,
This sword shall disenchant her.
LEOST. : O my heart-strings !
[*Exeunt* LEOSTHENES *and* TIMAGORAS.
TIMAND. : I knew 'twould take. Pardon me, fair Cleora,
Though I appear a traitress ; which thou wilt do,
In pity of my woes, when I make known
My lawful claim, and only seek mine own. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Prison.* MARULLO *discovered in chains.*

Enter CLEORA *and* GAOLER.

CLEO. : There's for your privacy. Stay, unbind his hands.
GAOL. : I dare not, madam.
CLEO. : I will buy thy danger :
Take more gold ;—do not trouble me with thanks,
I do suppose it done. [*Exit* GAOLER.
MAR. : My better angel
Assumes this shape to comfort me, and wisely ;
Since, from the choice of all celestial figures,
He could not take a visible form so full
Of glorious sweetness. [*Kneels.*

CLEO. : Rise. I am flesh and blood,
And do partake thy tortures.
MAR. : Can it be,
That charity should persuade you to descend
So far from your own height, as to vouchsafe
To look upon my sufferings ? How I bless
My fetters now, and stand engaged to fortune
For my captivity—no, my freedom, rather !
For who dare think that place a prison, which
You sanctify with your presence ? or believe,
Sorrow has power to use her sting on him,
That is in your compassion arm'd, and made
Impregnable, though tyranny raise at once
All engines to assault him ?
CLEO. : Indeed virtue,
With which you have made evident proofs that you
Are strongly fortified, cannot fall, though shaken
With the shock of fierce temptations ; but still triumphs
In spite of opposition. For myself,
I may endeavour to confirm your goodness,
(A sure retreat which never will deceive you,)
And with unfeigned tears express my sorrow
For what I cannot help.
MAR. : Do you weep for me !
O, save that precious balm for nobler uses :
I am unworthy of the smallest drop,
Which, in your prodigality of pity,
You throw away on me. Ten of these pearls
Were a large ransom to redeem a kingdom
From a consuming plague, or stop heaven's vengeance,
Call'd down by crying sins, though, at that instant,
In dreadful flashes falling on the roofs
Of bold blasphemers. I am justly punish'd
For my intent of violence to such pureness ;
And all the torments flesh is sensible of,
A soft and gentle penance.
CLEO. : Which is ended
In this your free confession.

Enter LEOSTHENES *and* TIMAGORAS *behind.*

LEOST. : What an object
Have I encountered !
TIMAG. : I'm blasted too :
Yet hear a little further.
MAR. : Could I expire now,
These white and innocent hands closing my eyes thus,
'Twere not to die, but in a heavenly dream
To be transported, without the help of Charon,
To the Elysian shades. You make me bold ;
And, but to wish such happiness, I fear,
May give offence.
CLEO. : No ; for believ't, Marullo,
You've won so much upon me, that I know not
That happiness in my gift, but you may challenge.

LEOST. : Are you yet satisfied ?
CLEO. : Nor can you wish
But what my vows will second, though it were
Your freedom first, and then in me full power
To make a second tender of myself,
And you receive the present. By this kiss,
From me a virgin bounty, I will practise
All arts for your deliverance ; and that purchased,
In what concerns your further aims, I speak it,
Do not despair, but hope——
TIMAGORAS *and* LEOSTHENES *come forward.*
TIMAG. : To have the hangman,
When he is married to the cross, in scorn
To say *Gods give you joy !*
LEOST. : But look on me,
And be not too indulgent to your folly ;
And then, but that grief stops my speech, imagine
What language I should use.
CLEO. : Against thyself :
Thy malice cannot reach me.
TIMAG. : How ?
CLEO. : No, brother,
Though you join in the dialogue to accuse me :
What I have done, I'll justify ; and these favours,
Which, you presume, will taint me in my honour,
Though jealousy use all her eyes to spy out
One stain in my behaviour, or envy
As many tongues to wound it, shall appear
My best perfections. For, to the world,
I can in my defence allege such reasons,
As my accusers shall stand dumb to hear them ;
When in his fetters this man's worth and virtues,
But truly told, shall shame your boasted glories,
Which fortune claims a share in.
TIMAG. : The base villain
Shall never live to hear it. [*Draws his sword.*
CLEO. : Murder ! help !
Through me, you shall pass to him.

Enter ARCHIDAMUS, DIPHILUS, *and* OFFICERS.

ARCHID. : What's the matter ?
On whom is your sword drawn ? are you a judge ?
Or else ambitious of the hangman's office,
Before it be design'd you ?—You are bold, too ;
Unhand my daughter.
LEOST. : She's my valour's prize.
ARCHID. : With her consent, not otherwise.
You may urge
Your title in the court ; if it prove good,
Possess her freely.—Guard him safely off too.
TIMAG. : You'll hear me, sir ?
ARCHID. : If you have aught to say,
Deliver it in public ; all shall find
A just judge of Timoleon.

DIPH. : You must
Of force now use your patience.
[*Exeunt all but* TIMAGORAS *and* LEOSTHENES.
TIMAG. : Vengeance rather !
Whirlwinds of rage possess me : you are wrong'd
Beyond a Stoic sufferance ; yet you stand
As you were rooted.
LEOST. : I feel something here,
That boldly tells me, all the love and service
I pay Cleora is another's due,
And therefore cannot prosper.
TIMAG. : Melancholy ;
Which now you must not yield to.
LEOST. : 'Tis apparent :
In fact your sister's innocent, however
Changed by her violent will.
TIMAG. : If you believe so,
Follow the chase still ; and in open court
Plead your own interest : we shall find the judge
Our friend, I fear not.
LEOST. : Something I shall say,
But what——
TIMAG. : Collect yourself as we walk thither. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Court of Justice.*

Enter TIMOLEON, ARCHIDAMUS, CLEORA, *and* OFFICERS.

TIMOL. : 'Tis wonderous strange ! nor can it fall within
The reach of my belief, a slave should be
The owner of a temperance which this age
Can hardly parallel in freeborn lords,
Or kings proud of their purple.
ARCHID. : 'Tis most true ;
And, though at first it did appear a fable,
All circumstances meet to give it credit ;
Which works so on me, that I am compell'd
To be a suitor, not to be denied,
He may have equal hearing.
CLEO. : Sir, you graced me
With the title of your mistress ; but my fortune
Is so far distant from command, that I
Lay by the power you gave me, and plead humbly
For the preserver of my fame and honour.
And pray you, sir, in charity believe,
That, since I had ability of speech,
My tongue has been so much inured to truth,
I know not how to lie.
TIMOL. : I'll rather doubt
The oracles of the gods, than question what
Your innocence delivers ; and, as far
As justice and mine honour can give way,
He shall have favour. Bring him in unbound : [*Exeunt* OFFICERS.
And though Leosthenes may challenge from me,
For his late worthy service, credit to
All things he can allege in his own cause,

Marullo, so, I think, you call his name,
Shall find I do reserve one ear for him,
Enter CLEON, ASOTUS, DIPHILUS, OLYMPIA, *and* CORISCA.
To let in mercy. Sit, and take your places ;
The right of this fair virgin first determined,
Your bondmen shall be censured.

CLEON. : With all rigour,
We do expect.

CORIS. : Temper'd, I say, with mercy.

nter at one door LEOSTHENES *and* TIMAGORAS ; *at the other,* OFFICERS *with* MARULLO *and* TIMANDRA.

TIMOL. : Your hand, Leosthenes : I cannot doubt,
You, that have been victorious in the war,
Should, in a combat fought with words, come off
But with assured triumph.

LEOST. : My deserts, sir,
If, without arrogance, I may style them such,
Arm me from doubt and fear.

TIMOL. : 'Tis nobly spoken.
Nor be thou daunted (howsoe'er thy fortune
Has mark'd thee out a slave) to speak thy merits :
For virtue, though in rags, may challenge more
Than vice, set off with all the trim of greatness.

MAR. : I had rather fall under so just a judge,
Than be acquitted by a man corrupt,
And partial in his censure.

ARCHID. : Note his language ;
It relishes of better breeding than
His present state dares promise.

TIMOL. : I observe it.
Place the fair lady in the midst, that both,
Looking with covetous eyes upon the prize
They are to plead for, may, from the fair object,
Teach Hermes eloquence.

LEOST. : Am I fallen so low ?
My birth, my honour, and, what's dearest to me,
My love, and, witness of my love, my service,
So undervalued, that I must contend
With one, where my excess of glory must
Make his o'erthrow a conquest ? Shall my fulness
Supply defects in such a thing, that never
Knew anything but want and emptiness,
Give him a name, and keep it such, from this
Unequal competition ? If my pride,
Or any bold assurance of my worth,
Has pluck'd this mountain of disgrace upon me,
I am justly punish'd, and submit : but if
I have been modest, and esteem'd myself
More injured in the tribute of the praise,
Which no desert of mine, prized by self-love,
Ever exacted, may this cause and minute
For ever be forgotten ! I dwell long
Upon mine anger, and now turn to you,

Ungrateful fair one ; and, since you are such,
'Tis lawful for me to proclaim myself,
And what I have deserved.

CLEO. : Neglect and scorn
From me, for this proud vaunt.

LEOST. : You nourish, lady,
Your own dishonour in this harsh reply,
And almost prove what some hold of your sex,
You are all made up of passion : for, if reason
Or judgment could find entertainment with you,
Or that you would distinguish of the objects
You look on, in a true glass, not seduced
By the false light of your too violent will,
I should not need to plead for that which you,
With joy, should offer. Is my high birth a blemish ?
Or does my wealth, which all the vain expense
Of women cannot waste, breed loathing in you ?
The honours I can call mine own, thought scandals ?
Am I deform'd, or, for my father's sins,
Mulcted by nature ? If you interpret these
As crimes, 'tis fit I should yield up myself
Most miserably guilty. But, perhaps,
(Which yet I would not credit,) you have seen
This gallant pitch the bar, or bear a burthen
Would crack the shoulders of a weaker bondman :
Or any other boisterous exercise,
Assuring a strong back to satisfy
Your loose desires, insatiate as the grave.

CLEO. : You are foul-mouth'd.

ARCHID. : Ill-manner'd too.

LEOST. : I speak.
In the way of supposition, and entreat you,
With all the fervour of a constant lover,
That you would free yourself from these aspersions,
Or any imputation black-tongued slander
Could throw on your unspotted virgin whiteness :
To which there is no easier way, than by
Vouchsafing him your favour ; him, to whom,
Next to the general, and the gods and fautors,
The country owes her safety.

TIMAG. : Are you stupid ?
'Slight, leap into his arms, and there ask pardon—
Oh ! you expect your slave's reply ; no doubt
We shall have a fine oration : I will teach
My spaniel to howl in sweeter language,
And keep a better method.

ARCHID. : You forget
The dignity of the place.

DIPH. : Silence !

TIMOL. (*to* MARULLO.) : Speak boldly.

MAR. : 'Tis your authority gives me a tongue,
I should be dumb else ; and I am secure,
I cannot clothe my thoughts, and just defence,

In such an abject phrase, but 'twill appear
Equal, if not above my low condition.
I need no bombast language stolen from such
As make nobility from prodigious terms
The hearers understand not ; I bring with me
No wealth to boast of, neither can I number
Uncertain fortune's favours with my merits ;
I dare not force affection, or presume
To censure her discretion, that looks on me
As a weak man, and not her fancy's idol.
How I have loved, and how much I have suffer'd,
And with what pleasure undergone the burthen
Of my ambitious hopes, (in aiming at
The glad possession of a happiness,
The abstract of all goodness in mankind
Can at no part deserve,) with my confession
Of mine own wants, is all that can plead for me.
But if that pure desires, not blended with
Foul thoughts, that, like a river, keeps his course,
Retaining still the clearness of the spring
From whence it took beginning, may be thought
Worthy acceptance ; then I dare rise up,
And tell this gay man to his teeth, I never
Durst doubt her constancy, that, like a rock,
Beats off temptations, as that mocks the fury
Of the proud waves ; nor, from my jealous fears,
Question that goodness to which, as an altar
Of all perfection, he that truly loved
Should rather bring a sacrifice of service,
Than raze it with the engines of suspicion :
Of which, when he can wash an Æthiop white,
Leosthenes may hope to free himself ;
But, till then, never.

TIMAG. : Bold, presumptuous villain !

MAR. : I will go further, and make good upon him,
I' the pride of all his honours, birth, and fortunes,
He's more unworthy than myself.

LEOST. : Thou liest.

TIMAG. : Confute him with a whip, and, the doubt decided,
Punish him with a halter.

MAR. : O the gods !
My ribs, though made of brass, cannot contain
My heart, swollen big with rage. The lie !—a whip !
Let fury then disperse these clouds, in which
I long have march'd disguised ; (*throws off his disguise*) that,
when they know
Whom they have injured, they may faint with horror
Of my revenge, which, wretched men ! expect,
As sure as fate, to suffer.

LEOST. : Ha ! Pisander !

TIMAG. : 'Tis the bold Theban !

ASOT. : There's no hope for me then :
I thought I should have put in for a share,
And borne Cleora from them both ; but now,

This stranger looks so terrible, that I dare not
So much as look on her.

PISAN. : Now as myself,
Thy equal at thy best, Leosthenes.
For you, Timagoras, praise heaven you were born
Cleora's brother, 'tis your safest armour.
But I lose time,—The base lie cast upon me,
I thus return : Thou art a perjured man,
False, and perfidious, and hast made a tender
Of love and service to this lady, when
Thy soul, if thou hast any, can bear witness,
That thou wert not thine own : for proof of this,
Look better on this virgin, and consider,
This Persian shape laid by, and she appearing
In a Greekish dress, such as when first you saw her,
If she resemble not Pisander's sister,
One call'd Statilia ?

LEOST. : 'Tis the same ! My guilt
So chokes my spirits, I cannot deny
My falsehood, nor excuse it.

PISAN. : This is she,
To whom thou wert contracted : this the lady,
That, when thou wert my prisoner, fairly taken
In the Spartan war, that, begg'd thy liberty,
And with it gave herself to thee, ungrateful !

STATIL. : No more, sir, I entreat you : I perceive
True sorrow in his looks, and a consent
To make me reparation in mine honour ;
And then I am most happy.

PISAN. : The wrong done her,
Drew me from Thebes, with a full intent to kill thee :
But this fair object met me in my fury,
And quite disarm'd me. Being denied to have her,
By you, my lord Archidamus, and not able
To live far from her ; love, the mistress of
All quaint devices, prompted me to treat
With a friend of mine, who, as a pirate, sold me
For a slave to you, my lord, and gave my sister,
As a present, to Cleora.

TIMOL. : Strange meanders !

PISAN. : There how I bare myself, needs no relation ;
But, if so far descending from the height
Of my then flourishing fortunes, to the lowest
Condition of a man, to have means only
To feed my eye with the sight of what I honour'd ;
The dangers too I underwent, the sufferings ;
The clearness of my interest, may deserve
A noble recompense in your lawful favour ;
Now 'tis apparent that Leosthenes
Can claim no interest in you, you may please
To think upon my service.

CLEO. : Sir, my want
Of power to satisfy so great a debt,
Makes me accuse my fortune : but if that,

Out of the bounty of your mind, you think
A free surrender of myself full payment,
I gladly tender it.

ARCHID. : With my consent too,
All injuries forgotten.

TIMAG. : I will study,
In my future service, to deserve your favour,
And good opinion.

LEOST. : Thus I gladly fee
This advocate to plead for me. [*Kissing* STATILIA.

PISAN. : You will find me
An easy judge. When I have yielded reasons
Of your bondmen's falling off from their obedience,
Then after, as you please, determine of me.
I found their natures apt to mutiny
From your too cruel usage, and made trial
How far they might be wrought on ; to instruct you
To look with more prevention and care
To what they may hereafter undertake
Upon the like occasions. The hurt's little
They have committed ; nor was ever cure,
But with some pain, effected. I confess,
In hope to force a grant of fair Cleora,
I urged them to defend the town against you ;
Nor had the terror of your whips, but that
I was preparing for defence elsewhere,
So soon got entrance : In this I am guilty ;
Now, as you please, your censure.

TIMOL. : Bring them in ;
And, though you've given me power, I do entreat
Such as have undergone their insolence,
It may not be offensive, though I study
Pity, more than revenge.

CORIS. : 'Twill best become you.

CLEON. : I must consent.

ASOT. : For me, I'll find a time
To be revenged hereafter.

Enter GRACCULO, CIMBRIO, POLIPHRON, ZANTHIA, *and the other* SLAVES, *with halters about their necks.*

GRAC. : Give me leave ;
I'll speak for all.

TIMOL. : What canst thou say, to hinder
The course of justice ?

GRAC. : Nothing.—You may see
We are prepared for hanging, and confess
We have deserved it : our most humble suit is,
We may not twice be executed.

TIMOL. : Twice !
How meanest thou ?

GRAC. : At the gallows first, and after in a ballad
Sung to some villainous tune. There are ten-groat rhymers
About the town, grown fat on these occasions.
Let but a chapel fall, or a street be fired,

A foolish lover hang himself for pure love,
Or any such like accident, and, before
They are cold in their graves, some damn'd ditty's made,
Which makes their ghosts walk.—Let the state take order
For the redress of this abuse, recording
'Twas done by my advice, and, for my part,
I'll cut as clean a caper from the ladder,
As ever merry Greek did.

TIMOL. : Yet I think
You would shew more activity to delight
Your master for a pardon.

GRAC. : O ! I would dance,
As I were all air and fire. [*Capers.*

TIMOL. : And ever be
Obedient and humble ?

GRAC. : As his spaniel,
Though he kick'd me for exercise ; and the like
I promise for all the rest.

TIMOL. : Rise then, you have it.

ALL THE SLAVES : Timoleon ! Timoleon !

TIMOL. : Cease these clamours.
And now, the war being ended to our wishes,
And such as went the pilgrimage of love,
Happy in full fruition of their hopes,
'Tis lawful, thanks paid to the Powers divine,
To drown our cares in honest mirth and wine. [*Exeunt.*

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c. 1632

A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS

(By PHILIP MASSINGER)

This may or may not be a greater play than the eighteen neglected and the eighteen eliminated plays of Massinger. It happens to have enjoyed a stage vogue. The part of Sir Giles Overreach was discovered in the early days of the Actor-Manager regime, and, being eminently an actor-manager's part, became established in the repertory, to be "featured" as late as the eighteen-seventies, and, in America, even more recently.

This distinction, while assuredly it does no discredit to either part or whole, has been of no particular advantage to the author. Clement Scott, the great Victorian critic, could write casually in a work entitled "The Drama of Yesterday and To-day" : "I think of Phelps not as Hamlet or Othello or Sir Giles Overreach, but as Sir Pertinax, Justice Shallow, Bottom, Falstaff, Job Thornberry and Sir Peter Teazle". The name of Massinger does not occur anywhere in the two bulky volumes.

"A New Way to Pay Old Debts" is one of the rare plays of Massinger's concerned directly with English life, but it is none the less imaginatively stupendous for that.

A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS

Characters

ORD LOVELL
IR GILES OVERREACH, *a cruel extortioner*
RANK WELLBORN, *a prodigal*
'OM ALLWORTH, *a young gentleman, page to* LORD LOVELL
REEDY, *a hungry justice of peace*
ARRALL, *a term-driver; a creature of* SIR GILES OVERREACH
ORDER, *steward*
AMBLE, *usher*
FURNACE, *cook*
WATCHALL, *porter*
} *to* LADY ALLWORTH.
WILLDO, *a parson*
TAPWELL, *an alehouse keeper*
CREDITORS, SERVANTS, &c.
LADY ALLWORTH, *a rich widow*
MARGARET, OVERREACH's *daughter*
FROTH, TAPWELL's *wife*
CHAMBERMAID
WAITING WOMAN

Scene.—THE COUNTRY NEAR NOTTINGHAM.

ACT I

SCENE I.—*Before* TAPWELL's *House.*

Enter WELLBORN *in tattered apparel,* TAPWELL, *and* FROTH.

WELL. : No bouse? nor no tobacco?
TAP. : Not a suck, sir;
Nor the remainder of a single can
Left by a drunken porter, all night pall'd too.
FROTH. : Not the dropping of the tap for your morning's draught, sir:
'Tis verity, I assure you.
WELL. : Verity, you brache!
The devil turn'd precisian! Rogue, what am I?
TAP. : Troth, durst I trust you with a looking-glass,
To let you see your trim shape, you would quit me,
And take the name yourself.
WELL. : How, dog!
TAP. : Even so, sir.
And I must tell you, if you but advance
Your Plymouth cloak, you shall be soon instructed.
There dwells, and within call, if it please your worship,
A potent monarch, call'd the constable,
That does command a citadel call'd the stocks;
Whose guards are certain files of rusty billmen,
Such as with great dexterity will hale
Your tatter'd, lousy——
WELL. : Rascal! slave!
FROTH. : No rage, sir.
TAP. : At his own peril: Do not put yourself
In too much heat, there being no water near
To quench your thirst; and sure, for other liquor,
As mighty ale, or beer, they are things, I take it,
You must no more remember; not in a dream, sir.
WELL. : Why, thou unthankful villain, dar'st thou talk thus!
Is not thy house, and all thou hast, my gift?

TAP. : I find it not in chalk ; and Timothy Tapwell
Does keep no other register.
WELL. : Am not I he
Whose riots fed and clothed thee ? wert thou not
Born on my father's land, and proud to be
A drudge in his house ?
TAP. : What I was, sir, it skills not ;
What you are, is apparent : now, for a farewell,
Since you talk of father, in my hope it will torment you,
I'll briefly tell your story. Your dead father,
My quondam master, was a man of worship,
Old Sir John Wellborn, justice of peace and quorum,
And stood fair to be custos rotulorum :
Bore the whole sway of the shire, kept a great house,
Relieved the poor, and so forth ; but he dying,
And the twelve hundred a year coming to you,
Late master Francis, but now forlorn Wellborn——
WELL. : Slave, stop ! or I shall lose myself.
FROTH. : Very hardly ;
You cannot out of your way.
TAP. : But to my story :
You were then a lord of acres, the prime gallant,
And I your under butler ; note the change now :
You had a merry time of't ; hawks and hounds,
With choice of running horses : mistresses
Of all sorts and all sizes, yet so hot,
As their embraces made your lordships melt ;
Which your uncle, Sir Giles Overreach, observing,
(Resolving not to lose a drop of them,)
On foolish mortgages, statues, and bonds,
For a while supplied your looseness, and then left you.
WELL. : Some curate hath penn'd this invective, mongrel,
And you have studied it.
TAP. : I have not done yet :
Your land gone, and your credit not worth a token,
You grew the common borrower ; no man scaped
Your paper-pellets, from the gentleman
To the beggars on highways, that sold you switches
In your gallantry.
WELL. : I shall switch your brains out.
TAP. : Where poor Tim Tapwell, with a little stock,
Some forty pounds or so, bought a small cottage ;
Humbled myself to marriage with my Froth here,
Gave entertainment——
WELL. : Yes, to whores and canters,
Clubbers by night.
TAP. : True, but they brought in profit,
And had a gift to pay for what they called for ;
And stuck not like your mastership. The poor income
I glean'd from them hath made me in my parish
Thought worthy to be scavenger, and in time
May rise to be overseer of the poor ;
Which if I do, on your petition, Wellborn,

I may allow you thirteen-pence a quarter,
And you shall thank my worship.

WELL. : Thus, you dog-bolt,
And thus—— [*Beats and kicks him.*

TAP. (*to his wife*) : Cry out for help !

WELL. : Stir, and thou diest :
Your potent prince, the constable, shall not save you.
Hear me, ungrateful hell-bound ! did not I
Make purses for you ? then you lick'd my boots,
And thought your holiday cloak too coarse to clean them.
'Twas I that, when I heard thee swear if ever
Thou couldst arrive at forty pounds, thou wouldst
Live like an emperor, 'twas I that gave it
In ready gold. Deny this, wretch !

TAP. : I must, sir ;
For, from the tavern to the taphouse, all,
On forfeiture of their licenses, stand bound
Ne'er to remember who their best guests were,
If they grew poor like you.

WELL. : They are well rewarded
That beggar themselves to make such cuckolds rich.
Thou viper, thankless viper ! impudent bawd !—
But since you are grown forgetful, I will help
Your memory, and tread you into mortar ;
Not leave one bone unbroken. [*Beats him again.*

TAP. : Oh !

FROTH. : Ask mercy.

Enter ALLWORTH.

WELL. : 'Twill not be granted.

ALL : Hold, for my sake hold.
Deny me, Frank ! they are not worth your anger.

WELL. : For once thou hast redeem'd them from this sceptre ;
But let them vanish, creeping on their knees,
And, if they grumble, I revoke my pardon.

FROTH : This comes of your prating, husband ; you presumed
On your ambling wit, and must use your glib tongue,
Though you are beaten lame for't.

TAP. : Patience, Froth ;
There's law to cure our bruises.

[*They crawl off on their hands and knees.*

WELL. : Sent to your mother ?

ALL. : My lady, Frank, my patroness, my all !
She's such a mourner for my father's death,
And, in her love to him, so favours me,
That I cannot pay too much observance to her :
There are few such stepdames.

WELL. : 'Tis a noble widow,
And keeps her reputation pure, and clear
From the least taint of infamy ; her life,
With the splendour of her actions, leaves no tongue
To envy or detraction. Prithee tell me,
Has she no suitors ?

ALL. : Even the best of the shire, Frank,
My lord, excepted ; such as sue, and send,
And send, and sue again, but to no purpose ;
Their frequent visits have not gain'd her presence.
Yet she's so far from sullenness and pride,
That I dare undertake you shall meet from her
A liberal entertainment : I can give you
A catalogue of her suitors' names.

WELL. : Forbear it,
While I give you good counsel : I am bound to it.
Thy father was my friend ; and that affection
I bore to him, in right descends to thee ;
Thou art a handsome and a hopeful youth,
Nor will I have the least affront stick on thee,
If I with any danger can prevent it.

ALL : I thank your noble care ; but, pray you, in what
Do I run the hazard ?

WELL. : Art thou not in love ?
Put it not off with wonder.

ALL : In love, at my years !

WELL. : You think you walk in clouds, but are transparent.
I have heard all, and the choice that you have made ;
And, with my finger, can point out the north star
By which the loadstone of your folly's guided ;
And, to confirm this true, what think you of
Fair Margaret, the only child and heir
Of Cormorant Overreach ? Does it blush and start
To hear her only named ? blush at your want
Of wit, and reason.

ALL : You are too bitter, sir.

WELL. : Wounds of this nature are not to be cured
With balms, but corrosives. I must be plain :
Art thou scarce manumised from the porter's lodge,
And yet sworn servant to the pantofle,
And dars't thou dream of marriage ? I fear
'Twill be concluded for impossible.
That there is now, or e'er shall be hereafter,
A handsome page, or player's boy of fourteen,
But either loves a wench, or drabs love him ;
Court-waiters not exempted.

ALL : This is madness.
Howe'er you have discover'd my intents,
You know my aims are lawful ; and if ever
The queen of flowers, the glory of the spring,
The sweetest comfort to our smell, the rose,
Sprang from an envious briar, I may infer,
There's such disparity in their conditions,
Between the goodness of my soul, the daughter,
And the base churl her father.

WELL. : Grant this true,
As I believe it, canst thou ever hope
To enjoy a quiet bed with her, whose father
Ruin'd thy state ?

ALL : And yours too.

WELL. : I confess it.
True ; I must tell you as a friend, and freely,
That, where impossibilities are apparent,
'Tis indiscretion to nourish hopes.
Canst thou imagine (let not self-love blind thee)
That Sir Giles Overreach, that, to make her great
In swelling titles, without touch of conscience,
Will cut his neighbour's throat, and I hope his own too,——
Will e'er consent to make her thine ? Give o'er,
And think of some course suitable to thy rank,
And prosper in it.

ALL : You have well advised me.
But, in the mean time, you, that are so studious
Of my affairs, wholly neglect your own :
Remember yourself, and in what plight you are.

WELL. : No matter, no matter.

ALL : Yes, 'tis much material :
You know my fortune, and my means ; yet something,
I can spare from myself, to help your wants.

WELL. : How's this ?

ALL : Nay, be not angry ; there's eight pieces,
To put you in better fashion.

WELL. : Money from thee !
From a boy ! a stipendiary ! one that live
At the devotion of a stepmother,
And the uncertain favour of a lord !
I'll eat my arms first. Howsoe'er blind Fortune
Hath spent the utmost of her malice on me ;
Though I am vomited out of an alehouse,
And thus accoutred ; know not where to eat,
Or drink, or sleep, but underneath this canopy ;
Although I thank thee, I despise thy offer :
And as I, in my madness, broke my state,
Without the assistance of another's brain,
In my right wits I'll piece it ; at the worst,
Die thus, and be forgotten.

ALL : A strange humour ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* LADY ALLWORTH'S *House.*

Enter ORDER, AMBLE, FURNACE, *and* WATCHALL.

ORD. : Set all things right, or, as my name is Order,
And by this staff of office that commands you,
This chain and double ruff, symbols of power,
Whoever misses in his function,
For one whole week makes forfeiture of his breakfast,
And privilege in the wine-cellar.

AMB. : You are merry,
Good master steward.

FURN. : Let him ; I'll be angry.

AMB. : Why, fellow Furnace, 'tis not twelve o'clock yet,
Nor dinner taking up ; then, 'tis allow'd,
Cooks, by their places, may be choleric.

FURN. : You think you have spoke wisely, goodman Amble,
My lady's go-before !
ORD. : Nay, nay, no wrangling.
FURN. : Twit me with the authority of the kitchen !
At all hours, and all places, I'll be angry ;
And thus provoked, when I am at my prayers
I will be angry.
AMB. : There was no hurt meant.
FURN. : I am friends with thee ; and yet I will be angry.
ORD. : With whom ?
FURN. : No matter whom : yet, now I think on it,
I am angry with my lady.
WATCH. : Heaven forbid, man !
ORD. : What cause has she given thee ?
FURN. : Cause enough, master steward.
I was entertained by her to please her palate,
And, till she forswore eating, I perform'd it.
Now, since our master, noble Allworth, died,
Though I crack my brains to find out tempting sauces,
And raise fortifications in the pastry,
Such as might serve for models in the Low Countries ;
Which, if they had been practised at Breda,
Spinola might have thrown his cap at it, and ne'er took it——
AMB. : But you had wanted matter there to work on.
FURN. : Matter ! with six eggs, and a strike of rye meal,
I had kept the town till doomsday, perhaps longer.
ORD. : But what's this to your pet against my lady ?
FURN. : What's this ? marry this ; when I am three parts roasted,
And the fourth part parboiled, to prepare her viands,
She keeps her chamber, dines with a panada,
Or water-gruel, my sweat never thought on.
ORD. : But your art is seen in the dining-room.
FURN. : By whom ?
By such as pretend love to her ; but come
To feed upon her. Yet, of all the harpies
That do devour her, I am out of charity
With none so much as the thin-gutted squire,
That's stolen into commission.
ORD. : Justice Greedy ?
FURN. : The same, the same : meat's cast away upon him,
It never thrives ; he holds this paradox,
Who eats not well, can ne'er do justice well :
His stomach's as insatiate as the grave,
Or strumpets' ravenous appetites. [*Knocking withi*
WATCH. : One knocks. [*Exi*
ORD. : Our late young master !

Re-enter WATCHALL *and* ALLWORTH.

AMB. : Welcome, sir.
FURN. : Your hand ;
If you have a stomach, a cold bake-meat's ready.
ORD. : His father's picture in little.
FURN. : We are all your servants.
AMB. : In you he lives.

ALL : At once, my thanks to all ;
This is yet some comfort. Is my lady stirring ?

Enter LADY ALLWORTH, WAITING WOMAN, *and* CHAMBERMAID.

ORD. : Her presence answers for us.
L. ALL. : Sort those silks well.
I'll take the air alone.
[*Exeunt* WAITING WOMAN *and* CHAMBERMAID.
FURN. : You air and air ;
But will you never taste but spoon-meat more ?
To what use serve I ?
L. ALL. : Prithee, be not angry ;
I shall ere long ; i' the mean time, there is gold
To buy thee aprons, and a summer suit.
FURN. : I am appeased, and Furnace now grows cool.
L. ALL. : And, as I gave directions, if this morning
I am visited by any, entertain them
As heretofore ; but say, in my excuse,
I am indisposed.
ORD. : I shall, madam.
L. ALL. : Do, and leave me.
Nay, stay you, Allworth.
[*Exeunt* ORDER, AMBLE, FURNACE, *and* WATCHALL.
ALL. : I shall gladly grow here,
To wait on your commands.
L. ALL. : So soon turn'd courtier !
ALL. : Style not that courtship, madam, which is duty
Purchased on your part.
L. ALL. : Well, you shall o'ercome ;
I'll not contend in words. How is it with
Your noble master ?
ALL. : Ever like himself ;
No scruple lessen'd in the full weight of honour :
He did command me, pardon my presumption,
As his unworthy deputy, to kiss
You ladyship's fair hands.
L. ALL. : I am honour'd in
His favour to me. Does he hold his purpose
For the Low Countries ?
ALL. : Constantly, good madam ;
But he will in person first present his service.
L. ALL. : And how approve you of his course ? you are yet
Like virgin parchment, capable of any
Inscription, vicious or honourable.
I will not force your will, but leave you free
To your own election.
ALL. : Any form you please,
I will put on ; but, might I make my choice,
With humble emulation I would follow
The path my lord marks to me.
L. ALL. : 'Tis well answer'd,
And I commend your spirit : you had a father,
Bless'd be his memory ! that some few hours
Before the will of heaven took him from me,

Who did commend you, by the dearest ties
Of perfect love between us, to my charge ;
And, therefore, what I speak, you are bound to hear,
With such respect as if he lived in me.
He was my husband, and howe'er you are not
Son of my womb, you may be of my love,
Provided you deserve it.

ALL. : I have found you,
Most honour'd madam, the best mother to me ;
And, with my utmost strengths of care and service,
Will labour that you never may repent
Your bounties shower'd upon me.

L. ALL. : I much hope it.
These were your father's words : *If e'er my son*
Follow the war, tell him it is a school,
Where all the principles tending to honour
Are taught, if truly follow'd : but for such
As repair thither, as a place in which
They do presume they may with license practise
Their lusts and riots, they shall never merit
The noble name of soldiers. To dare boldly
In a fair cause, and for their country's safety,
To run upon the cannon's mouth undaunted ;
To obey their leaders, and shun mutinies ;
To bear with patience the winter's cold,
And summer's scorching heat, and not to faint,
When plenty of provision fails, with hunger ;
Are the essential parts make up a soldier,
Not swearing, dice, or drinking.

ALL. : There's no syllable
You speak, but is to me an oracle,
Which but to doubt were impious.

L. ALL. : To conclude :
Beware ill company, for often men
Are like to those with whom they do converse ;
And, from one man I warn you, and that's Wellborn :
Not 'cause he's poor, that rather claims your pity ;
But that he's in his manners so debauch'd,
And hath to vicious courses sold himself.
'Tis true, your father loved him, while he was
Worthy the loving ; but if he had lived
To have seen him as he is, he had cast him off.
As you must do.

ALL. : I shall obey in all things.

L. ALL. : Follow me to my chamber, you shall have gold
To furnish you like my son, and still supplied,
As I hear from you.

ALL. : I am still your creature. [*Exeunt*

SCENE III.—*A Hall in the same.*

Enter OVERREACH, GREEDY, ORDER, AMBLE, FURNACE, WATCHALL, *and* MARRALL.

GREEDY : Not to be seen !

OVER. : Still cloister'd up ! Her reason,
I hope, assures her, though she make herself
Close prisoner ever for her husband's loss,
'Twill not recover him.
ORD. : Sir, it is her will,
Which we, that are her servants, ought to serve,
And not dispute : howe'er, you are nobly welcome ;
And, if you please to stay, that you may think so,
There came, not six days since, from Hull, a pipe,
Of rich Canary, which shall spend itself
For my lady's honour.
GREEDY : Is it of the right race ?
ORD. : Yes, master Greedy.
AMB. : How his mouth runs o'er !
FURN. : I'll make it run, and run. Save your good worship !
GREEDY : Honest master cook, thy hand ; again : how I love thee !
Are the good dishes still in being ? speak, boy.
FURN. : If you have a mind to feed, there is a chine
Of beef, well season'd.
GREEDY : Good !
FURN. : A pheasant, larded.
GREEDY : That I might now give thanks for't !
FURN. : Other kickshaws.
Besides, there came last night, from the forest of Sherwood,
The fattest stag I ever cook'd.
GREEDY : A stag, man !
FURN. : A stag, sir ; part of it prepared for dinner,
And baked in puff-paste.
GREEDY : Puff-paste too ! Sir Giles,
A ponderous chine of beef ! a pheasant larded !
And red deer too, sir Giles, and baked in puff-paste !
All business set aside, let us give thanks here.
FURN. : How the lean skeleton's rapt ?
OVER. : You know we cannot.
MAR. : Your worships are to sit on a commission,
And if you fail to come, you lose the cause.
GREEDY : Cause me no causes. I'll prove't, for such a dinner,
We may put off a commission : you shall find it
Henrici decimo quarto.
OVER. : Fie, master Greedy !
Will you lose me a thousand pounds for a dinner,
No more, for shame ! we must forget the belly,
When we think of profit.
GREEDY : Well, you shall o'er-rule me ;
I could e'en cry now.—Do you hear, master cook,
Send but a corner of that immortal pasty,
And I, in thankfulness, will, by your boy,
Send you—a brace of three-pences.
FURN. : Will you be so prodigal ?

Enter WELLBORN.

OVER. : Remember me to your lady. Who have we here ?
WELL. : You know me.

OVER. : I did once, but now I will not ;
Thou art no blood of mine. Avaunt, thou beggar !
If ever thou presume to own me more,
I'll have thee caged, and whipp'd.
GREEDY : I'll grant the warrant.
Think of pie-corner, Furnace !

[*Exeunt* OVERREACH, GREEDY, *and* MARRALL.

WATCH. : Will you out, sir ?
I wonder how you durst creep in.
ORD. : This is rudeness,
And saucy impudence.
AMB. : Cannot you stay
To be serv'd, among your fellows, from the basket,
But you must press into the hall ?
FURN. : Prithee, vanish
Into some outhouse, though it be the pigstie ;
My scullion shall come to thee.

Enter ALLWORTH.

WELL. : This is rare :
Oh, here's Tom Allworth. Tom !
ALL. : We must be strangers ;
Nor would I have you seen here for a million. [*Exit.*
WELL. : Better and better. He contemns me too !

Enter WAITING WOMAN *and* CHAMBERMAID.

WOMAN : Foh, what a smell's here ! what thing's this ?
CHAM. : A creature.
Made out of the privy ; let us hence, for love's sake,
Or I shall swoon.
WOMAN : I begin to faint already.

[*Exeunt* WAITING WOMAN *and* CHAMBERMAID.

WATCH. : Will you know your way ?
AMB. : Or shall we teach it you,
By the head and shoulders ?
WELL. : No ; I will not stir ;
Do you mark, I will not : let me see the wretch
That dares attempt to force me. Why, you slaves,
Created only to make legs, and cringe ;
To carry in a dish, and shift a trencher ;
That have not souls only to hope a blessing
Beyond black jacks or flagons ; you, that were born
Only to consume meat and drink, and batten
Upon reversions !—who advances ? who
Shews me the way ?
ORD. : My lady !

Enter LADY ALLWORTH, WAITING WOMAN, *and* CHAMBERMAID.

CHAM. : Here's the monster.
WOMAN. : Sweet madam, keep your glove to your nose.
CHAM. : Or let me
Fetch some perfumes may be predominant ;
You wrong yourself else.
WELL. : Madam, my designs
Bear me to you.

L. All. : To me !
Well. : And though I have met with
But ragged entertainment from your grooms here,
I hope from you to receive that noble usage
As may become the true friend of your husband.
And then I shall forget these.
L. All. : I am amazed
To see, and hear this rudeness. Darest thou think,
Though sworn, that it can ever find belief,
That I, who to the best men of this country
Denied my presence, since my husband's death,
Can fall so low, as to change words with thee ?
Thou son of infamy ! forbear my house,
And know, and keep the distance that's between us ;
Or, though it be against my gentler temper,
I shall take order you no more shall be
An eyesore to me.
Well. : Scorn me not, good lady ;
But, as in form you are angelical,
Imitate the heavenly natures, and vouchsafe
At the least awhile to hear me. You will grant
The blood that runs in this arm is as noble
As that which fills your veins, those costly jewels,
And those rich clothes you wear, your men's observance,
And women's flattery, are in you no virtues ;
Nor these rags, with my poverty, in me vices.
You have a fair fame, and, I know deserve it ;
Yet, lady, I must say in nothing more,
Than in the pious sorrow you have shewn
For your late noble husband.
Ord. : How she starts !
Furn. : And hardly can keep finger from the eye,
To hear him named.
L. All. : Have you aught else to say ?
Well. : That husband, madam, was once in his fortune
Almost as low as I ; want, debts, and quarrels
Lay heavy on him : let it not be thought
A boast in me, though I say, I relieved him.
'Twas I that gave him fashion ; mine the sword,
That did on all occasions second his ;
I brought him on and off with honour, lady ;
And when in all men's judgments he was sunk,
And, in his own hopes, not to be buoy'd up,
I stepp'd unto him, took him by the hand,
And set him upright.
Furn. : Are not we base rogues,
That could forget this ?
Well. : I confess, you made him
Master of your estate ; nor could your friends,
Though he brought no wealth with him, blame you for it
For he had a shape, and to that shape a mind
Made up of all parts, either great or noble ;
So winning a behaviour, not to be
Resisted, madam.

L. All. : 'Tis most true, he had.
Well. : For his sake, then, in that I was his friend,
Do not contemn me.
L. All. : For what's past excuse me,
I will redeem it. Order, give the gentleman
A hundred pounds.
Well. : No, madam, on no terms :
I will not beg nor borrow sixpence of you,
But be supplied elsewhere, or want thus ever.
Only one suit I make, which you deny not
To strangers ; and 'tis this. [*Whispers to her.*
L. All. : Fie ! nothing else ?
Well. : Nothing, unless you please to charge your servants,
To throw away a little respect upon me.
L. All. : What you demand is yours.
Well. : I thank you, lady.
Now what can be wrought out of such a suit
Is yet in supposition : (*Aside.*)—I have said all ;
When you please, you may retire. (*Exit* Lady Allworth.)—
Nay, all's forgotten ; [*To the servants.*
And, for a lucky omen to my project,
Shake hands, and end all quarrels in the cellar.
Ord. : Agreed, agreed.
Furn. : Still merry master Wellborn. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*A Room in* Overreach's *House.*

Enter Overreach *and* Marrall.

Over. : He's gone, I warrant thee ; this commission crush'd him.
Mar. : Your worships have the way on't, and ne'er miss
To squeeze these unthrifts into air : and yet,
The chapfall'n justice did his part, returning
For your advantage, the certificate,
Against his conscience, and his knowledge too,
With your good favour, to the utter ruin
Of the poor farmer.
Over. : 'Twas for these good ends
I made him a justice : he that bribes his belly,
Is certain to command his soul.
Mar. : I wonder,
Still with your license, why, your worship having
The power to put this thin-gut in commission,
You are not in't yourself ?
Over. : Thou art a fool ;
In being out of office I am out of danger ;
Where, if I were a justice, besides the trouble,
I might or out of wilfulness, or error,
Run myself finely into a premunire,
And so become a prey to the informer.
No, I'll have none of't ; 'tis enough I keep
Greedy at my devotion : so he serve
My purposes, let him hang, or damn, I care not ;
Friendship is but a word.

MAR. : You are all wisdom.
OVER. : I would be worldly wise ; for the other wisdom,
That does prescribe us a well govern'd life,
And to do right to others, as ourselves,
I value not an atom.
MAR. : What course take you,
With your good patience, to hedge in the manor
Of your neighbour, master Frugal ? as 'tis said
He will nor sell, nor borrow, nor exchange ;
And his land, lying in the midst of your many lordships,
Is a foul blemish.
OVER. : I have thought on't, Marrall.
And it shall take. I must have all men sellers,
And I the only purchaser.
MAR. : 'Tis most fit, sir.
OVER. : I'll therefore buy some cottage near his manor,
Which done, I'll make my men break ope his fences,
Ride o'er his standing corn, and in the night
Set fire on his barns, or break his cattle's legs :
These trespasses draw on suits, and suits expenses,
Which I can spare, but will soon beggar him.
When I have harried him thus two or three year,
Though he sue *in forma pauperis*, in spite
Of all his thrift and care, he'll grow behindhand.
MAR. : The best I ever heard ! I could adore you.
OVER. : Then, with the favour of my man of law,
I will pretend some title : want will force him
To put it to arbitrement ; then, if he sell
For half the value, he shall have ready money,
And I possess his land.
MAR. : 'Tis above wonder !
Wellborn was apt to sell, and needed not
These fine arts, sir, to hook him in.
OVER. : Well thought on.
This varlet, Marrall, lives too long, to upbraid me
With my close cheat put upon him. Will nor cold,
Nor hunger, kill him ?
MAR. : I know not what to think on't.
I have used all means ; and the last night I caused
His host, the tapster, to turn him out of doors ;
And have been since with all your friends and tenants,
And, on the forfeit of your favour, charged them,
Though a crust of mouldy bread would keep him from starving,
Yet they should not relieve him. This is done, sir.
OVER. : That was something, Marrall ; but thou must go further,
And suddenly, Marrall.
MAR. : Where, and when you please, sir.
OVER. : I would have thee seek him out, and, if thou canst,
Persuade him that 'tis better steal than beg ;
Then, if I prove he has but robb'd a henroost,
Not all the world shall save him from the gallows.
Do any thing to work him to despair ;
And 'tis thy masterpiece.
MAR. : I will do my best, sir.

OVER. : I am now on my main work with the lord Lovell,
The gallant-minded, popular lord Lovell,
The minion of the people's love. I hear
He's come into the country, and my aims are
To insinuate myself into his knowledge,
And then invite him to my house.
MAR. : I have you ;
This points at my young mistress.
OVER. : She must part with
That humble title, and write honourable,
Right honourable, Marrall, my right honourable daughter ;
If all I have, or e'er shall get, will do it.
I'll have her well attended ; there are ladies
Of errant knights decay'd, and brought so low,
That for cast clothes and meat will gladly serve her.
And 'tis my glory, though I come from the city,
To have their issue whom I have undone,
To kneel to mine as bondslaves.
MAR. : 'Tis fit state, sir.
OVER. : And therefore, I'll not have a chambermaid
That ties her shoes, or any meaner office,
But such whose fathers were right worshipful.
'Tis a rich man's pride ! there having ever been
More than a feud, a strange antipathy,
Between us and true gentry.

Enter WELLBORN.

MAR. : See, who's here, sir.
OVER. : Hence, monster ! prodigy !
WELL. : Sir, your wife's nephew,
She and my father tumbled in one belly.
OVER. : Avoid my sight ! thy breath's infectious, rogue !
I shun thee as a leprosy, or the plague.—
Come hither, Marrall—this is the time to work him.
[*Aside, and exit.*
MAR. : I warrant you, sir.
WELL. : By this light I think he's mad.
MAR. : Mad ! had you ta'en compassion on yourself,
You long since had been mad.
WELL. : You have ta'en a course
Between you and my venerable uncle,
To make me so.
MAR. : The more pale-spirited you,
That would not be instructed. I swear deeply——
WELL. : By what ?
MAR. : By my religion.
WELL. : Thy religion !
The devil's creed :—but what would you have done ?
MAR. : Had there been but one tree in all the shire,
Nor any hope to compass a penny halter,
Before, like you, I had outlived my fortunes,
A withe had served my turn to hang myself.
I am zealous in your cause ; pray you hang yourself,
And presently, as you love your credit.

WELL. : I thank you.
MAR. : Will you stay till you die in a ditch, or lice devour you ?——
Or, if you dare not do the feat yourself,
But that you'll put the state to charge and trouble,
Is there no purse to be cut, house to be broken,
Or market-woman with eggs, that you may murder,
And so dispatch the business ?
WELL. : Here's variety,
I must confess ; but I'll accept of none,
Of all your gentle offers, I assure you.
MAR. : Why, have you hope ever to eat again,
Or drink ? or be the master of three farthings ?
If you like not hanging, drown yourself ; take some course
For your reputation.
WELL. : 'Twill not do, dear tempter,
With all the rhetoric the fiend hath taught you.
I am as far as thou art from despair ;
Nay, I have confidence, which is more than hope,
To live, and suddenly, better than ever.
MAR. : Ha ! ha ! these castles you build in the air,
Will not persuade me or to give, or lend,
A token to you.
WELL. : I'll be more kind to thee :
Come, thou shalt dine with me.
MAR. : With you !
WELL. : Nay more, dine gratis.
MAR. : Under what hedge, I pray you ? or at whose cost ?
Are they padders, or abram-men that are your consort ?
WELL. : Thou art incredulous ; but thou shalt dine,
Not alone at her house, but with a gallant lady ;
With me, and with a lady.
MAR. : Lady ! what lady ?
With the lady of the lake, or queen of fairies ?
For I know it must be an enchanted dinner.
WELL. : With the lady Allworth, knave.
MAR. : Nay, now there's hope
Thy brain is crack'd.
WELL. : Mark there, with what respect
I am entertain'd.
MAR. : With choice, no doubt, of dog-whips.
Why, dost thou ever hope to pass her porter ?
WELL. : 'Tis not far off, go with me ; trust thine own eyes.
MAR. : Troth, in my hope, or my assurance rather,
To see thee curvet, and mount like a dog in a blanket,
If ever thou presume to pass her threshold,
I will endure thy company.
WELL. : Come along then. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* LADY ALLWORTH'S *House.*

Enter ALLWORTH, WAITING WOMAN, CHAMBERMAID, ORDER, AMBLE, FURNACE, *and* WATCHALL.

WOMAN : Could you not command your leisure one hour longer ?
CHAM. : Or half an hour ?

ALL. : I have told you what my haste is :
Besides, being now another's, not mine own,
Howe'er I much desire to enjoy you longer,
My duty suffers, if, to please myself,
I should neglect my lord.
WOMAN : Pray you do me the favour
To put these few quince-cakes into your pocket ;
They are of mine own preserving.
CHAM. : And this marmalade ;
'Tis comfortable for your stomach.
WOMAN : And, at parting,
Excuse me if I beg a farewell from you.
CHAM. : You are still before me. I move the same suit, sir.
[ALLWORTH *kisses them severally.*
FURN. : How greedy these chamberers are of a beardless chin !
I think the tits will ravish him.
ALL. : My service
To both.
WOMAN : Ours waits on you.
CHAM. : And shall do ever.
ORD. : You are my lady's charge, be therefore careful
That you sustain your parts.
WOMAN : We can bear, I warrant you.
[*Exeunt* WAITING WOMAN *and* CHAMBERMAID.
FURN. : Here, drink it off ; the ingredients are cordial,
And this the true elixir ; it hath boil'd
Since midnight for you. 'Tis the quintessence
Of five cocks of the game, ten dozen of sparrows,
Knuckles of veal, potatoe-roots, and marrow,
Coral, and ambergris : were you two years older,
And I had a wife, or gamesome mistress,
I durst trust you with neither : you need not bait
After this, I warrant you, though your journey's long ;
You may ride on the strength of this till to-morrow morning.
ALL. : Your courtesies overwhelm me : I much grieve
To part from such true friends ; and yet find comfort,
My attendance on my honourable lord,
Whose resolution holds to visit my lady,
Will speedily bring me back. [*Knocking within.*
[*Exit* WATCHALL.
MAR. (*within*) : Dar'st thou venture further ?
WELL (*within*) : Yes, yes, and knock again.
ORD. : 'Tis he ; disperse !
AMB. : Perform it bravely.
FURN. : I know my cue, ne'er doubt me.
[*Exeunt all but* ALLWORTH.

Re-enter WATCHALL, *ceremoniously introducing* WELLBORN *and* MARRALL.

WATCH. : Beast that I was, to make you stay ! most welcome ;
You were long since expected.
WELL. : Say so much
To my friend, I pray you.
WATCH. : For your sake, I will, sir.

MAR. : For his sake !
WELL. : Mum ; this is nothing.
MAR. : More than ever
I would have believed, though I had found it in my primer.
ALL. : When I have given you reasons for my late harshness,
You'll pardon and excuse me ; for, believe me,
Though now I part abruptly, in my service
I will deserve it.
MAR. : Service ! with a vengeance !
WELL. : I am satisfied : farewell, Tom.
ALL. : All joy stay with you ! [*Exit.*

Re-enter AMBLE.

AMB. : You are happily encounter'd ; I yet never
Presented one so welcome as, I know,
You will be to my lady.
MAR. : This is some vision ;
Or, sure, these men are mad, to worship a dunghill ;
It cannot be a truth.
WELL. : Be still a pagan,
An unbelieving infidel ; be so, miscreant,
And meditate on *blankets, and on dog-whips !*

Re-enter FURNACE.

FURN. : I am glad you are come ; until I know your pleasure,
I knew not how to serve up my lady's dinner.
MAR. : His pleasure ! is it possible ?
WELL. : What's thy will ?
FURN. : Marry, sir, I have some growse, and turkey chicken,
Some rails and quails, and my lady will'd me ask you,
What kind of sauces best affect your palate,
That I may use my utmost skill to please it.
MAR. : The devil's enter'd this cook : sauce for his palate !
That, on my knowledge, for almost this twelvemonth,
Durst wish but cheeseparings and brown bread on Sundays.
[*Aside.*
WELL. : That way I like them best.
FURN. : It shall be done, sir. [*Exit.*
WELL. : What think you of *the hedge we shall dine under ?*
Shall we feed gratis ?
MAR. : I know not what to think ;
Pray you make me not mad.

Re-enter ORDER.

ORD. : This place becomes you not ;
Pray you walk, sir, to the dining room.
WELL. : I am well here,
Till her ladyship quits her chamber.
MAR. : Well here, say you ?
'Tis a rare change ! but yesterday you thought
Yourself well in a barn, wrapp'd up in pease-straw.
Re-enter WAITING WOMAN *and* CHAMBERMAID.
WOMAN : O ! sir, you are wish'd for.
CHAM. : My lady dreamt, sir, of you.

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WOMAN : And the first command she gave, after she rose,
Was, (her devotions done,) to give her notice
When you approach'd here.
CHAM. : Which is done, on my virtue.
MAR. : I shall be converted ; I begin to grow
Into a new belief, which saints, nor angels,
Could have won me to have faith in.
WOMAN : Sir, my lady !

Enter LADY ALLWORTH.

L. ALL. : I come to meet you, and languish'd till I saw you.
This first kiss is for form ; I allow a second
To such a friend. [*Kisses* WELLBORN.
MAR. : To such a friend ! heaven bless me !
WELL. : I am wholly yours ; yet, madam, if you please
To grace this gentleman with a salute——
MAR. : Salute me at his bidding !
WELL. : I shall receive it
As a most high favour.
L. ALL. : Sir, you may command me.
[*Advances to salute* MARRALL, *who retires.*
WELL. : Run backward from a lady ! and such a lady !
MAR. : To kiss her foot is, to poor me, a favour
I am unworthy of. [*Offers to kiss her foot.*
L. ALL. : Nay, pray you rise ;
And since you are so humble, I'll exalt you :
You shall dine with me to-day, at mine own table.
MAR. : Your ladyship's table ! I am not good enough
To sit at your steward's board.
L. ALL. : You are too modest :
I will not be denied.

Re-enter FURNACE.

FURN. : Will you still be babbling
Till your meat freeze on the table ? the old trick still ;
My art ne'er thought on !
L. ALL. : Your arm, master Wellborn :——
Nay, keep us company. [*To* MARRALL.
MAR. : I was ne'er so graced.
[*Exeunt* WELLBORN, LADY ALLWORTH, AMBLE, MARRALL,
WAITING WOMAN, *and* CHAMBERMAID.
ORD. : So ! we have play'd our parts, and are come off well ;
But if I know the mystery, why my lady
Consented to it, or why master Wellborn
Desired it, may I perish !
FURN. : Would I had
The roasting of his heart that cheated him,
And forces the poor gentleman to these shifts !
By fire ! for cooks are Persians, and swear by it,
Of all the griping and extorting tyrants
I ever heard or read of, I ne'er met
A match to sir Giles Overreach.
WATCH. : What will you take
To tell him so, fellow Furnace ?

FUR. : Just as much
As my throat is worth, for that would be the price on't.
To have a usurer that starves himself,
And wears a cloak of one and twenty years
On a suit of fourteen groats, bought of the hangman,
To grow rich, and then purchase, is too common :
But this sir Giles feeds high, keeps many servants,
Who must at his command do any outrage ;
Rich in his habit, vast in his expenses ;
Yet he to admiration still increases
In wealth, and lordships.
ORD. : He frights men out of their estates,
And breaks through all law-nets, made to curb ill men,
As they were cobwebs. No man dares reprove him.
Such a spirit to dare, and power to do, were never
Lodged so unluckily.

Re-enter AMBLE *laughing.*

AMB. : Ha ! ha ! I shall burst.
ORD. : Contain thyself, man.
FURN. : Or make us partakers
Of your sudden mirth.
AMB. : Ha ! ha ! my lady has got
Such a guest at her table !—this term-driver, Marrall,
This snip of an attorney——
FURN. : What of him, man ?
AMB. : The knave thinks still he's at the cook's shop in Ram Alley,
Where the clerks divide, and the elder is to choose ;
And feeds so slovenly !
FURN. : Is this all ?
AMB. : My lady
Drank to him for fashion sake, or to please master Wellborn ;
As I live, he rises, and takes up a dish
In which there were some remnants of a boil'd capon,
And pledges her in white broth !
FURN. : Nay, 'tis like
The rest of his tribe.
AMB. : And when I brought him wine,
He leaves his stool, and, after a leg or two,
Most humbly thanks my worship.
ORD. : Risen already !
AMB. : I shall be chid.

Re-enter LADY ALLWORTH, WELLBORN, *and* MARRALL.

FURN. : My lady frowns.
L. ALL. : You wait well ! [*To* AMBLE.
Let me have no more of this ; I observed your jeering :
Sirrah, I'll have you know, whom I think worthy
To sit at my table, be he ne'er so mean,
When I am present, is not your companion.
ORD. : Nay, she'll preserve what's due to her.
FURN. : This refreshing
Follows your flux of laughter.

L. ALL. (*to* WELLBORN.) You are master
Of your own will. I know so much of manners,
As not to inquire your purposes ; in a word,
To me you are ever welcome, as to a house
That is your own.
WELL. : Mark that. [*Aside to* MARRALL.
MAR. : With reverence, sir,
An it like your worship.
WELL. : Trouble yourself no further,
Dear madam ; my heart's full of zeal and service,
However in my language I am sparing.
Come, Master Marrall.
MAR. : I attend your worship.
[*Exeunt* WELLBORN *and* MARRALL.
L. ALL. : I see in your looks you are sorry, and you know me
An easy mistress : be merry ; I have forgot all.
Order and Furnace, come with me ; I must give you
Further directions.
ORD. : What you please.
FURN. : We are ready . [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Country near* LADY ALLWORTH'S *House.*

Enter WELLBORN, *and* MARRALL *bare-headed.*

WELL. : I think I am in a good way.
MAR. : Good ! sir ; the best way,
The certain best way.
WELL. : There are casualties
That men are subject to.
MAR. : You are above them ;
And as you are already worshipful,
I hope ere long you will increase in worship,
And be, right worshipful.
WELL. : Prithee do not flout me :
What I shall be, I shall be. Is't for your ease,
You keep your hat off ?
MAR. : Ease ! an it like your worship !
I hope Jack Marrall shall not live so long,
To prove himself such an unmannerly beast,
Though it hail hazel-nuts, as to be cover'd
When your worship's present.
WELL. : Is not this a true rogue,
That, out of mere hope of a future cozenage,
Can turn thus suddenly ? 'tis rank already. [*Aside.*
MAR. : I know your worship's wise, and needs no counsel :
Yet if, in my desire to do you service,
I humbly offer my advice, (but still
Under correction,) I hope I shall not
Incur your high displeasure.
WELL. : No ; speak freely.
MAR. : Then, in my judgment, sir, my simple judgment,
(Still with your worship's favour,) I could wish you
A better habit, for this cannot be
But much distasteful to the noble lady,

(I say no more) that loves you : for, this morning,
To me, and I am but a swine to her,
Before the assurance of her wealth perfumed you,
You savour'd not of amber.

WELL. : I do now then !

MAR. : This your batoon hath got a touch on it.——
[*Kisses the end of his cudgel.*
Yet if you please, for change, I have twenty pounds here,
Which, out of my true love, I'll presently
Lay down at your worship's feet ; 'twill serve to buy you
A riding suit.

WELL. : But where's the horse ?

MAR. : My gelding.
Is at your service : nay, you shall ride me,
Before your worship shall be put to the trouble
To walk afoot. Alas ! when you are lord
Of this lady's manor, as I know you will be,
You may with the lease of glebe land, call'd Knave's-acre,
A place I would manure, requite your vassal.

WELL. : I thank thy love, but must make no use of it ;
What's twenty pounds ?

MAR. : 'Tis all that I can make, sir.

WELL. : Dost thou think, though I want clothes, I could not have them,
For one word to my lady ?

MAR. : As I know not that !

WELL. : Come, I will tell thee a secret, and so leave thee.
I will not give her the advantage, though she be
A gallant-minded lady, after we are married,
(There being no woman, but is sometimes froward,)
To hit me in the teeth, and say, she was forced
To buy my wedding-clothes, and took me on,
With a plain riding-suit, and an ambling nag,
No, I'll be furnish'd something like myself,
And so farewell : for thy suit touching Knave's-acre.
When it is mine, 'tis thine. [*Exit.*

MAR. : I thank your worship.
How was I cozen'd in the calculation
Of this man's fortune ! my master cozen'd too,
Whose pupil I am in the art of undoing men ;
For that is our profession ! Well, well, master Wellborn,
You are of a sweet nature, and fit again to be cheated :
Which, if the Fates please, when you are possess'd
Of the land and lady, you, sans question, shall be.
I'll presently think of the means.
[*Walks by musing.*

Enter OVERREACH, *speaking to a servant within.*

OVER. : Sirrah, take my horse.
I'll walk to get me an appetite ; 'tis but a mile,
And exercise will keep me from being pursey.
Ha ! Marrall ! is he conjuring ? perhaps
The knave has wrought the prodigal to do
Some outrage on himself, and now he feels

Compunction in his conscience for't : no matter.
So it be done. Marrall !

MAR. : Sir.

OVER. : How succeed we
In our plot on Wellborn ?

MAR. : Never better, sir.

OVER. : Has he hang'd or drown'd himself ?

MAR. : No, sir, he lives ;
Lives once more to be made a prey to you,
A greater prey than ever.

OVER. : Art thou in thy wits ?
If thou art, reveal this miracle, and briefly.

MAR. : A lady, sir, is fall'n in love with him.

OVER. : With him ? what lady ?

MAR. : The rich lady Allworth.

OVER. : Thou dolt ! how dar'st thou speak this ?

MAR. : I speak truth.
And I do so but once a year, unless
It be to you, sir : we dined with her ladyship.
I thank his worship.

OVER. : His worship !

MAR. : As I live, sir,
I dined with him, at the great lady's table,
Simple as I stand here : and saw when she kiss'd him,
And would, at his request, have kiss'd me too :
But I was not so audacious as some youths are,
That dare do anything, be it ne'er so absurd,
And sad after performance.

OVER. : Why, thou rascal !
To tell me these impossibilities.
Dine at her table ! and kiss him ! or thee !——
Impudent varlet, have not I myself,
To whom great countesses' doors have oft flew open,
Ten times attempted, since her husband's death,
In vain, to see her, though I came—a suitor ?
And yet your good solicitorship, and rogue Wellborn,
Were brought into her presence, feasted with her !——
But that I know thee a dog that cannot blush,
This most incredible lie would call up one,
On they buttermilk cheeks.

MAR. : Shall I not trust my eyes, sir,
Or taste ? I feel her good cheer in my belly.

OVER. : You shall feel me, if you give not over, sirrah :
Recover your brains again, and be no more gull'd
With a beggar's plot, assisted by the aids
Of serving-men and chambermaids, for beyond these
Thou never saw'st a woman, or I'll quit you
From my employments.

MAR. : Will you credit this yet ?
On my confidence of their marriage, I offer'd Wellborn——
I would give a crown now I durst say his worship——

[*Aside.*

My nag, and twenty pounds.

OVER. : Did you so, ideot ! [*Strikes him down.*
Was this the way to work him to despair,
Or rather to cross me ?
MAR. : Will your worship kill me ?
OVER. : No, no ; but drive the lying spirit out of you.
MAR. : He's gone.
OVER. : I have done then : now, forgetting
Your late imaginary feast and lady,
Know, my lord Lovell dines with me to-morrow.
Be careful nought be wanting to receive him ;
And bid my daughter's women trim her up,
Though they paint her, so she catch the lord, I'll thank them ;
There's a piece for my late blows.
MAR. : I must yet suffer :
But there may be a time—— [*Aside.*
OVER. : Do you grumble ?
MAR. : No, sir. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—*The Country near* OVERREACH'S *House.*

Enter LORD LOVELL, ALLWORTH, *and* SERVANTS.

LOV. : Walk the horses down the hill : something in private
I must impart to Allworth. [*Exeunt* SERVANTS.
ALL. : O, my lord,
What sacrifice of reverence, duty, watching,
Although I could put off the use of sleep,
And ever wait on your commands to serve them ;
What dangers, though in ne'er so horrid shapes,
Nay death itself, though I should run to meet it,
Can I, and with a thankful willingness suffer ;
But still the retribution will fall short
Of your bounties shower'd upon me ?
LOV. : Loving youth ;
Till what I purpose be put into act,
Do not o'erprize it ; since you have trusted me
With your soul's nearest, nay, her dearest secret,
Rest confident 'tis in a cabinet lock'd
Treachery shall never open. I have found you
(For so much to your face I must profess,
Howe'er you guard your modesty with a blush for't)
More zealous in your love and service to me,
Than I have been in my rewards.
ALL. : Still great ones,
Above my merit.
LOV. : Such your gratitude calls them :
Nor am I of that harsh and rugged temper
As some great men are taxed with, who imagine
They part from the respect due to their honours,
If they use not all such as follow them,
Without distinction of their births, like slaves.
I am not so condition'd : I can make
A fitting difference between my footboy,
And a gentleman bv want compell'd to serve me.

ALL. : 'Tis thankfully acknowledged ; you have been
More like a father to me than a master :
Pray you, pardon the comparison.
LOV. : I allow it ;
And to give you assurance I am pleased in't,
My carriage and demeanour to your mistress,
Fair Margaret, shall truly witness for me,
I can command my passions.
ALL. : 'Tis a conquest
Few lords can boast of when they are tempted—Oh !
LOV. : Why do you sigh ? can you be doubtful of me ?
By that fair name I in the wars have purchased,
And all my actions, hitherto untainted,
I will not be more true to mine own honour,
Than to my Allworth !
ALL. : As you are the brave lord Lovell,
Your bare word only given is an assurance
Of more validity and weight to me,
Than all the oaths, bound up with imprecations,
Which, when they would deceive, most courtiers practise :
Yet being a man, (for, sure, to style you more
Would relish of gross flattery,) I am forced,
Against my confidence of your worth and virtues,
To doubt, nay more, to fear.
LOV. : So young, and jealous !
ALL. : Were you to encounter with a single foe,
The victory were certain ; but to stand
The charge of two such potent enemies,
At once assaulting you, as wealth and beauty,
And those too seconded with power, is odds
Too great for Hercules.
LOV. : Speak your doubts and fears,
Since you will nourish them, in plainer language,
That I may understand them.
ALL. : What's your will,
Though I lend arms against myself, (provided
They may advantage you,) must be obey'd.
My much-loved lord, were Margaret only fair,
The cannon of her more than earthly form,
Though mounted high, commanding all beneath it,
And ramm'd with bullets of her sparkling eyes,
Of all the bulwarks that defend your senses
Could batter none, but that which guards your sight.
But when the well-tuned accents of her tongue
Make music to you, and with numerous sounds
Assault your hearing, (such as Ulysses, if [he]
Now lived again, howe'er he stood the Syrens,
Could not resist,) the combat must grow doubtful
Between your reason and rebellious passions.
Add this too ; when you feel her touch, and breath
Like a soft western wind, when it glides o'er
Arabia, creating gums and spices ;
And in the van, the nectar of her lips,
Which you must taste, bring the battalia on,

Well arm'd, and strongly lined with her discourse,
And knowing manners, to give entertainment ;—
Hippolytus himself would leave Diana,
To follow such a Venus.

LOV. : Love hath made you
Poetical, Allworth.

ALL. : Grant all these beat off,
Which if it be in man to do, you'll do it.
Mammon, in Sir Giles Overreach, steps in
With heaps of ill-got gold, and so much land,
To make her more remarkable, as would tire
A falcon's wings in one day to fly over.
O my good lord ! these powerful aids, which would
Make a mis-shapen negro beautiful,
(Yet are but ornaments to give her lustre,
That in herself is all perfection,) must
Prevail for her : I here release your trust ;
'Tis happiness, enough, for me to serve you,
And sometimes, with chaste eyes, to look upon her.

LOV. : Why, shall I swear ?

ALL. : O, by no means, my lord ;
And wrong not so your judgment to the world,
As from your fond indulgence to a boy,
Your page, your servant, to refuse a blessing
Divers great men are rivals for.

LOV. : Suspend
Your judgment till the trial. How far is it
To Overreach's house ?

ALL. : At the most, some half hour's riding ;
You'll soon be there.

LOV. : And you the sooner freed
From your jealous fears.

ALL. : O that I durst but hope it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* OVERREACH'S *House.*

Enter OVERREACH, GREEDY, *and* MARRALL.

OVER. : Spare for no cost ; let my dressers crack with the weight
Of curious viands.

GREEDY. : *Store indeed's no sore,* sir.

OVER. : That proverb fits your stomach, master Greedy.
And let no plate be seen but what's pure gold,
Or such whose workmanship exceeds the matter
That it is made of ; let my choicest linen
Perfume the room, and, when we wash, the water,
With precious powders mix'd, so please my lord,
That he may with envy wish to bathe so ever.

MAR. : 'Twill be very chargeable.

OVER. : Avaunt, you drudge !
Now all my labour'd ends are at the stake,
Is't a time to think of thrift ? Call in my daughter.
[*Exit* MARRALL.
And, master justice, since you love choice dishes,
And plenty of them——

GREEDY : As I do, indeed, sir,
Almost as much as to give thanks for them.
OVER. : I do confer that providence, with my power
Of absolute command to have abundance,
To your best care.
GREEDY : I'll punctually discharge it,
And give the best directions. Now am I,
In mine own conceit, a monarch ; at the least,
Arch-president of the boil'd, the roast, the baked,
For which I will eat often ; and give thanks
When my belly's braced up like a drum, and that's pure justice.
[*Exit.*
OVER. : It must be so : should the foolish girl prove modest,
She may spoil all ; she had it not from me,
But from her mother ; I was ever forward,
As she must be, and therefore I'll prepare her.

Enter MARGARET.

Alone—and let your women wait without.
MARG. : Your pleasure, sir ?
OVER. : Ha ! this is a neat dressing !
These orient pearls and diamonds well placed too !
The gown affects me not, it should have been,
Embroider'd o'er and o'er with flowers of gold ;
But these rich jewels, and quaint fashion help it.
And how below ? since oft the wanton eye,
The face observed, descends unto the foot,
Which being well proportion'd, as yours is,
Invites as much as perfect white and red,
Though without art. How like you your new woman,
The lady Downfallen ?
MARG. : Well, for a companion ;
Not as a servant.
OVER. : Is she humble, Meg,
And careful too, her ladyship forgotten ?
MARG. : I pity her fortune.
OVER. : Pity her ! trample on her.
I took her up in an old tamin gown,
(Even starv'd for want of twopenny chops,) to serve thee,
And if I understand she but repines
To do thee any duty, though ne'er so servile,
I'll pack her to her knight, where I have lodged him,
Into the counter, and there let them howl together.
MARG. : You know your own ways ; but for me, I blush
When I command her, that was once attended
With persons not inferior to myself,
In birth.
OVER. : In birth ! why, art thou not my daughter,
The blest child of my industry and wealth ?
Why, foolish girl, was't not to make thee great,
That I have run, and still pursue, those ways
That hale down curses on me, which I mind not !
Part with these humble thoughts, and apt thyself
To the noble state I labour to advance thee ;

Or, by my hopes, to see thee honourable,
I will adopt a stranger to my heir,
And throw thee from my care : do not provoke me.
MARG. : I will not, sir ; mould me which way you please.

Re-enter GREEDY.

OVER. : How ! interrupted !
GREEDY : 'Tis matter of importance.
The cook, sir, is self-will'd and will not learn
From my experience : there's a fawn brought in, sir,
And, for my life, I cannot make him roast it
With a Norfolk dumpling in the belly of it ;
And, sir, we wise men know, without the dumpling
'Tis not worth three-pence.
OVER. : Would it were whole in thy belly,
To stuff it out ! cook it any way ; prithee, leave me.
GREEDY : Without order for the dumpling ?
OVER. : Let it be dumpled
Which way thou wilt ; or tell him, I will scald him
In his own caldron.
GREEDY. : I had lost my stomach
Had I lost my mistress dumpling ; I'll give thanks for't.
[*Exit.*
OVER. : But to our business, Meg ; you have heard who dines here ?
MARG. : I have, sir.
OVER. : 'Tis an honourable man ;
A lord, Meg, and commands a regiment
Of soldiers, and, what's rare, is one himself,
A bold and understanding one : and to be
A lord, and a good leader, in one volume,
Is granted unto few but such as rise up
The kingdom's glory.

Re-enter GREEDY.

GREEDY : I'll resign my office,
If I be not better obey'd.
OVER. : 'Slight, art thou frantic ?
GREEDY : Frantic ! 'twould make me frantic, and stark mad,
Were I not a justice of peace and quorum too,
Which this rebellious cook cares not a straw for.
There are a dozen of woodcocks——
OVER. : Make thyself
Thirteen, the baker's dozen.
GREEDY : I am contented,
So they may be dress'd to my mind ; he has found out
A new device for sauce, and will not dish them
With toasts and butter ; my father was a tailor,
And my name, though a justice, Greedy Woodcock ;
And, ere I'll see my lineage so abused,
I'll give up my commission.
OVER. (*aloud*) : Cook !—Rogue, obey him !
I have given the word, pray you now remove yourself
To a collar of brawn, and trouble me no further.
GREEDY : I will, and meditate what to eat at dinner. [*Exit.*

OVER. : And as I said, Meg, when this gull disturb'd us,
This honourable lord, this colonel,
I would have thy husband.
MARG. : There's too much disparity
Between his quality and mine, to hope it.
OVER. : I more than hope, and doubt not to effect it.
Be thou no enemy to thyself ; my wealth
Shall weigh his titles down, and make you equals.
Now for the means to assure him thine, observe me ;
Remember he's a courtier, and a soldier,
And not to be trifled with ; and, therefore, when
He comes to woo you, see you do not coy it :
This mincing modesty has spoil'd many a match
By a first refusal, in vain after hoped for.
MARG. : You'll have me, sir, preserve the distance that
Confines a virgin ?
OVER. : Virgin me no virgins ?
I must have you lose that name, or you lose me.
I will have you private—start not—I say, private ;
If thou art my true daughter, not a bastard,
Thou wilt venture alone with one man, though he came
Like Jupiter to Semele, and come off, too ;
And therefore, when he kisses you, kiss close.
MARG. : I have heard this is the strumpet's fashion, sir,
Which I must never learn.
OVER. : Learn any thing,
And from any creature that may make thee great ;
From the devil himself.
MARG. : This is but devilish doctrine ! [*Aside.*
OVER. : Or, if his blood grow hot, suppose he offer
Beyond this, do not you stay till it cool,
But meet his ardour ; if a couch be near,
Sit down on't, and invite him.
MARG. : In your house,
Your own house, sir ! for heaven's sake, what are you then ?
Or what shall I be, sir ?
OVER. : Stand not on form ;
Words are no substances.
MARG. : Though you could dispense
With your own honour, cast aside religion,
The hopes of heaven, or fear of hell ; excuse me,
In worldly policy, this is not the way
To make me his wife ; his whore, I grant it may do.
My maiden honour so soon yielded up,
Nay, prostituted, cannot but assure him
I, that am light on him, will not hold weight
Whene'er tempted by others ; so, in judgment,
When to his lust I have given up my honour,
He must and will forsake me.
OVER. : How ! forsake thee !
Do I wear a sword for fashion ? or is this arm
Shrunk up, or wither'd ? does there live a man
Of that large list I have encounter'd with

Can truly say I e'er gave inch of ground
Not purchased with his blood that did oppose me?
Forsake thee when the thing is done! he dares not.
Give me but proof he has enjoyed thy person,
Though all his captains, echoes to his will,
Stood arm'd by his side to justify the wrong,
And he himself in the head of his bold troop,
Spite of his lordship, and his colonelship,
Or the judge's favour, I will make him render
A bloody and a strict accompt, and force him,
By marrying thee, to cure thy wounded honour!
I have said it.

Re-enter MARRALL.

MAR. : Sir, the man of honour's come,
Newly alighted.
OVER. : In, without reply;
And do as I command, or thou art lost.
[*Exit* MARGARET.
Is the loud music I gave order for
Ready to receive him?
MAR. : 'Tis, sir.
OVER. : Let them sound
A princely welcome, (*Exit* MARRALL.) Roughness awhile leave me;
For fawning now, a stranger to my nature,
Must make way for me.

Loud music. Enter LORD LOVELL, GREEDY, ALLWORTH, *and* MARRALL.

LOV. : Sir, you meet your trouble.
OVER. : What you are pleased to style so, is an honour
Above my worth and fortunes.
ALL. : Strange, so humble. [*Aside.*
OVER. : A justice of peace, my lord.
[*Presents* GREEDY *to him.*
LOV. : Your hand, good sir.
GREEDY : This is a lord, and some think this a favour;
But I had rather have my hand in my dumpling. [*Aside.*
OVER. : Room for my lord.
LOV. : I miss, sir, your fair daughter
To crown my welcome.
OVER. : May it please my lord
To taste a glass of Greek wine first, and suddenly
She shall attend my lord.
LOV. : You'll be obey'd, sir.
[*Exeunt all but* OVERREACH.
OVER. : 'Tis to my wish: as soon as come, ask for her!
Why Meg! Meg Overreach.—

Re-enter MARGARET.

How! tears in your eyes!
Hah! dry them quickly, or I'll dig them out.
Is this a time to whimper? meet that greatness
That flies into thy bosom, think what 'tis

For me to say, My honourable daughter ;
And thou, when I stand bare, to say, Put on ;
Or, Father, you forget yourself. No more,
But be instructed, or expect——he comes.

Re-enter LORD LOVELL, GREEDY, ALLWORTH, *and* MARRALL. LORD LOVELL *salutes* MARGARET.

A black-brow'd girl, my lord.

LOV. : As I live, a rare one.

ALL. : He's ta'en already : I am lost. [*Aside.*

OVER. : That kiss
Came twanging off, I like it ; quit the room.
[*Exeunt all but* OVER., LOV., *and* MARG.
A little bashful, my good lord, but you,
I hope, will teach her boldness.

LOV. : I am happy
In such a scholar : but——

OVER. : I am past learning,
And therefore leave you to yourselves :—remember.
[*Aside to* MARGARET, *and exit.*

LOV. : You see, fair lady, your father is solicitous,
To have you change the barren name of virgin
Into a hopeful wife.

MARG. : His haste, my lord,
Holds no power o'er my will.

LOV. : But o'er your duty.

MARG. : Which forced too much, may break.

LOV. : Bend rather, sweetest :
Think of your years.

MARG. : Too few to match with yours :
And choicest fruits too soon plucked, rot and wither.

LOV. : Do you think I am old ?

MARG. : I am sure I am too young.

LOV. : I can advance you.

MARG. : To a hill of sorrow ;
Where every hour I may expect to fall,
But never hope firm footing. You are noble,
I of a low descent, however rich ;
And tissues match'd with scarlet suit but ill.
O, my good lord, I could say more, but that
I dare not trust these walls.

LOV. : Pray you, trust my ear then.

Re-enter OVERREACH *behind, listening.*

OVER. : Close at it ! whispering ! this is excellent !
And, by their postures, a consent on both parts.

Re-enter GREEDY *behind.*

GREEDY : Sir Giles, Sir Giles !

OVER. : The great fiend stop that clapper !

GREEDY : It must ring out, sir, when my belly rings noon.
The baked-meats are run out, the roast turn'd powder.

OVER. : I shall powder you.

GREEDY : Beat me to dust, I care not ;
In such a cause as this, I'll die a martyr.

OVER. : Marry, and shall, you barathrum of the shambles !
[*Strikes him.*
GREEDY : How ! strike a justice of peace ! 'tis petty treason,
Edwardi quinto : but that you are my friend,
I would commit you without bail or main-prize.
OVER. : Leave your bawling, sir, or I shall commit you
Where you shall not dine to-day : disturb my lord,
When he is in discourse !
GREEDY : Is't a time to talk
When we should be munching ?
LOV. : Hah ! I heard some noise.
OVER. : Mum, villain ; vanish ! shall we break a bargain
Almost made up ? [*Thrusts* GREEDY *off.*
LOV. : Lady, I understand you,
And rest most happy in your choice, believe it ;
I'll be a careful pilot to direct
Your yet uncertain bark to a port of safety.
MARG. : So shall your honour save two lives, and bind us
Your slaves for ever.
LOV. : I am in the act rewarded,
Since it is good ; howe'er, you must put on
An amorous carriage towards me to delude
Your subtle father.
MARG. : I am prone to that.
LOV. : Now break we off our conference.—
Sir Giles !
Where is Sir Giles ? [OVERREACH *comes forward.*

Re-enter ALLWORTH, MARRALL, *and* GREEDY.

OVER. : My noble lord ; and how
Does your lordship find her ?
LOV. : Apt, Sir Giles, and coming ;
And I like her the better.
OVER. : So do I too.
LOV. : Yet should we take forts at the first assault,
'Twere poor in the defendant ; I must confirm her
With a love-letter or two, which I must have
Deliver'd by my page, and you give way to't.
OVER. : With all my soul :—a towardly gentleman !
Your hand, good master Allworth ; know my house
Is ever open to you.
ALL. : 'Twas shut till now. [*Aside.*
OVER. : Well done, well done, my honourable daughter !
Thou'rt so already : know this gentle youth,
And cherish him, my honourable daughter.
MARG. : I shall, with my best care.
[*Noise within as of a coach.*
OVER. : A coach !
GREEDY : More stops
Before we go to dinner ! O my guts !

Enter LADY ALLWORTH *and* WELLBORN.

L. ALL. : If I find welcome,
You share in it ; if not, I'll back again,

Now I know your ends ; for I come arm'd for all
Can be objected.

LOV. : How ! the lady Allworth !

OVER. : And thus attended !

[LOVELL *salutes* LADY ALLWORTH, LADY ALLWORTH *salutes* MARGARET.

MAR. : No, *I am a dolt !*
The spirit of lies hath enter'd me !

OVER. : Peace, Patch ;
'Tis more than wonder ! an astonishment
That does possess me wholly !

LOV. : Noble lady,
This is a favour, to prevent my visit,
The service of my life can never equal.

L. ALL. : My lord, I laid wait for you, and much hoped
You would have made my poor house your first inn :
And therefore doubting that you might forget me,
Or too long dwell here, having such ample cause,
In this unequall'd beauty, for your stay ;
And fearing to trust any but myself
With the relation of my service to you,
I borrow'd so much from my long restraint,
And took the air in person to invite you.

LOV. : Your bounties are so great, they rob me, madam,
Of words to give you thanks.

L. ALL. : Good sir Giles Overreach. [*Salutes him.*
—How dost thou, Marrall ? liked you my meat so ill,
You'll dine no more with me ?

GREEDY : I will, when you please,
An it like your ladyship.

L. ALL. : When you please, master Greedy ;
If meat can do it, you shall be satisfied.
And now, my lord, pray take into your knowledge
This gentleman ; howe'er his outside's coarse,
[*Presents* WELLBORN.
His inward linings are as fine and fair
As any man's ; wonder not I speak at large :
And howsoe'er his humour carries him
To be thus accoutred, or what taint so-ever,
For his wild life, hath stuck upon his fame
He may, ere long, with boldness, rank himself
With some that have contemn'd him. Sir Giles Overreach,
If I am welcome, bid him so.

OVER. : My nephew !
He has been too long a stranger : faith you have,
Pray let it be mended.
[LOVELL *confers aside with* WELLBORN.

MAR. : Why, sir, what do you mean ?
This is *rogue Wellborn, monster, prodigy,*
That should hang or drown himself ; no man of worship,
Much less your nephew.

OVER. : Well, sirrah, we shall reckon
For this hereafter.

MAR. : I'll not lose my jeer,
Though I be beaten dead for't.
WELL. : Let my silence plead
In my excuse, my lord, till better leisure
Offer itself to hear a full relation
Of my poor fortunes.
LOV. : I would hear, and help them.
OVER. : Your dinner waits you.
LOV. : Pray you lead, we follow.
L. ALL. : Nay, you are my guest ; come, dear master Wellborn.
[*Exeunt all but* GREEDY.
GREEDY : *Dear master Wellborn !* So she said : heaven ! heaven !
If my belly would give me leave, I could ruminate
All day on this : I have granted twenty warrants
To have him committed, from all prisons in the shire,
To Nottingham gaol ; and now, *Dear master Wellborn !*
And, *My good nephew !*—but I play the fool
To stand here prating, and forget my dinner.
Re-enter MARRALL.
Are they set, Marrall ?
MAR. : Long since ; pray you a word, sir.
GREEDY : No wording now.
MAR. : In troth, I must ; my master,
Knowing you are his good friend, makes bold with you,
And does entreat you, more guests being come in
Than he expected, especially his nephew,
The table being full too, you would excuse him,
And sup with him on the cold meat.
GREEDY : How ! no dinner,
After all my care ?
MAR. : 'Tis but a penance for
A meal ; besides, you broke your fast.
GREEDY : That was
But a bit to stay my stomach : a man in commission,
Give place to a tatterdemalion !
MAR. : No bug words, sir ;
Should his worship hear you——
GREEDY : Lose my dumpling too,
And butter'd toasts, and woodcocks !
MAR. : Come, have patience.
If you will dispense a little with your worship,
And sit with the waiting women, you'll have dumpling,
Woodcock, and butter'd toasts too.
GREEDY : This revives me :
I will gorge there sufficiently.
MAR. : This is the way, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another Room in* OVERREACH'S *House.*

Enter OVERREACH, *as from dinner.*

OVER. : She's caught ! O women !—she neglects my lord,
And all her compliments applied to Wellborn !
The garments of her widowhood laid by,
She now appears as glorious as the spring.

Her eyes fix'd on him, in the wine she drinks,
He being her pledge, she sends him burning kisses,
And sits on thorns, till she be private with him.
She leaves my meat, to feed upon his looks :
And if in our discourse he be but named,
From her a deep sigh follows. But why grieve I
At this ! it makes for me ; if she prove his,
All that is hers is mine, as I will work him.

Enter MARRALL.

MAR. : Sir, the whole board is troubled at your rising.
OVER. : No matter, I'll excuse it : prithee, Marrall,
Watch an occasion to invite my nephew
To speak with me in private.
MAR. : Who ! the *rogue*
The lady scorn'd to look on ?
OVER. : You are a wag.

Enter LADY ALLWORTH *and* WELLBORN.

MAR. : See, sir, she's come, and cannot be without him.
L. ALL. : With your favour, sir, after a plenteous dinner,
I shall make bold to walk a turn or two,
In your rare garden.
OVER. : There's an arbour too,
If your ladyship please to use it.
L. ALL. : Come, master Wellborn.

[*Exeunt* LADY ALLWORTH *and* WELLBORN.

OVER. : Grosser and grosser ! now I believe the poet
Feign'd not, but was historical, when he wrote
Pasiphaë was enamour'd of a bull :
This lady's lust's more monstrous.—My good lord,

Enter LORD LOVELL, MARGARET, *and the rest.*

Excuse my manners.
LOV. : There needs none, sir Giles,
I may ere long say Father, when it pleases
My dearest mistress to give warrant to it.
OVER. : She shall seal to it, my lord, and make me happy.

Re-enter WELLBORN *and* LADY ALLWORTH.

MARG. : My lady is return'd.
L. ALL. : Provide my coach,
I'll instantly away ; my thanks, sir Giles,
For my entertainment.
OVER. : 'Tis your nobleness
To think it such.
L. ALL. : I must do you a further wrong,
In taking away your honourable guest.
LOV. : I wait on you, madam ; farewell, good sir Giles.
L. ALL. : Good mistress Margaret ! nay, come, master Wellborn,
I must not leave you behind ; in sooth, I must not.
OVER. : Rob me not, madam, of all joys at once ;
Let my nephew stay behind : he shall have my coach,
And after some small conference between us,
Soon overtake your ladyship.
L. ALL. : Stay not long, sir.

LOV. : This parting kiss : (*kisses* MARGARET.) you shall every
day hear from me,
By my faithful page.
ALL. : 'Tis a service I am proud of.
[*Exeunt* LORD LOVELL, LADY ALLWORTH, ALLWORTH, *and*
MARRALL.
OVER. : Daughter, to your chamber.—(*Exit* MARGARET.)—You
may wonder, nephew,
After so long an enmity between us,
I should desire your friendship.
WELL. : So I do, sir ;
'Tis strange to me.
OVER. : But I'll make it no wonder ;
And what is more, unfold my nature to you.
We worldly men, when we see friends, and kinsmen,
Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand
To lift them up, but rather set our feet
Upon their heads, to press them to the bottom ;
As, I must yield, with you I practised it :
But, now I see you in a way to rise,
I can and will assist you ; this rich lady
(And I am glad of't) is enamour'd of you ;
'Tis too apparent, nephew.
WELL. : No such thing :
Compassion rather, sir.
OVER. : Well, in a word,
Because your stay is short, I'll have you seen
No more in this base shape ; nor shall she say,
She married you like a beggar, or in debt.
WELL. : He'll run into the noose, and save my labour. [*Aside.*
OVER. : You have a trunk of rich clothes, not far hence,
In pawn ; I will redeem them ; and that no clamour
May taint your credit for your petty debts,
You shall have a thousand pounds to cut them off,
And go a free man to the wealthy lady.
WELL. : This done, sir, out of love, and no ends else——
OVER. : As it is, nephew.
WELL. : Binds me still your servant.
OVER. : No compliments, you are staid for : ere you have supp'd
You shall hear from me. My coach, knaves, for my nephew.
To-morrow I will visit you.
WELL. : Here's an uncle
In a man's extremes ! how much they do belie you,
That say you are hard-hearted !
OVER. : My deeds, nephew,
Shall speak my love ; what men report I weigh not.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*A Room in* LADY ALLWORTH'S *House.*

Enter LORD LOVELL *and* ALLWORTH.

LOV. : 'Tis well ; give me my cloak ; I now discharge you
From further service : mind your own affairs,
I hope they will prove successful.

ALL. : What is blest
With your good wish, my lord, cannot but prosper.
Let aftertimes report, and to your honour,
How much I stand engaged, for I want language
To speak my debt ; yet if a tear or two
Of joy, for your much goodness, can supply
My tongue's defects, I could——
LOV. : Nay, do not melt :
This ceremonial thanks to me's superfluous.
OVER. (*within*) : Is my lord stirring ?
LOV. : 'Tis he ! oh, here's your letter : let him in.

Enter OVERREACH, GREEDY, *and* MARRALL.

OVER. : A good day to my lord !
LOV. : You are an early riser,
Sir Giles.
OVER. : And reason, to attend your lordship.
LOV. : And you, too, master Greedy, up so soon !
GREEDY : In troth, my lord, after the sun is up,
I cannot sleep, for I have a foolish stomach
That croaks for breakfast. With your lordship's favour,
I have a serious question to demand
Of my worthy friend sir Giles.
LOV. : Pray you use your pleasure.
GREEDY : How far, sir Giles, and pray you answer me
Upon your credit, hold you it to be
From your manor-house, to this of my lady Allworth's ?
OVER. : Why, some four mile.
GREEDY : How ! four mile, good sir Giles——
Upon your reputation, think better ;
For if you do abate but one half-quarter
Of five, you do yourself the greatest wrong
That can be in the world ; for four miles riding
Could not have raised so huge an appetite
As I feel gnawing on me.
MAR. : Whether you ride,
Or go afoot, you are that way still provided,
An it please your worship.
OVER. : How now, sirrah ? prating
Before my lord ! no difference ! Go to my nephew,
See all his debts discharged, and help his worship
To fit on his rich suit.
MAR. : I may fit you too.
Toss'd like a dog still ! [*Aside, and exit.*
LOV. : I have writ this morning
A few lines to my mistress, your fair daughter.
OVER. : 'Twill fire her, for she's wholly yours already :—
Sweet master Allworth, take my ring ; 'twill carry you
To her presence, I dare warrant you ; and there plead
For my good lord, if you shall find occasion.
That done, pray ride to Nottingham, get a license,
Still by this token. I'll have it dispatch'd,
And suddenly, my lord, that I may say,
My honourable, nay, right honourable daughter.

GREEDY : Take my advice, young gentleman, get your breakfast ;
'Tis unwholesome to ride fasting : I'll eat with you,
And eat to purpose.
OVER. : Some Fury's in that gut :
Hungry again ! did you not devour, this morning,
A shield of brawn, and a barrel of Colchester oysters ?
GREEDY : Why, that was, sir, only to scour my stomach.
A kind of a preparative. Come, gentleman,
I will not have you feed like the hangman of Flushing,
Alone, while I am here.
LOV. : Haste your return.
ALL. : I will not fail, my lord.
GREEDY : Nor I, to line
My Christmas coffer.

[*Exeunt* GREEDY *and* ALLWORTH.

OVER. : To my wish : we are private.
I came not to make offer with my daughter
A certain portion, that were poor and trivial :
In one word, I pronounce all that is mine,
In lands or leases, ready coin or goods,
With her, my lord, comes to you ; nor shall you have
One motive, to induce you to believe
I live too long, since every year I'll add
Something unto the heap, which shall be yours too.
LOV. : You are a right kind father.
OVER. : You shall have reason
To think me such. How do you like this seat ?
It is well wooded, and well water'd, the acres
Fertile and rich ; would it not serve for change,
To entertain your friends in a summer progress ?
What thinks my noble lord ?
LOV. : 'Tis a wholesome air,
And well-built pile ; and she that's mistress of it,
Worthy the large revenue.
OVER. : She the mistress !
It may be so for a time : but let my lord
Say only that he likes it, and would have it,
I say, ere long 'tis his.
LOV. : Impossible.
OVER. : You do conclude too fast, not knowing me,
Nor the engines that I work by. 'Tis not alone
The Lady Allworth's lands, for those once Wellborn's,
(As by her dotage on him I know they will be,)
Shall soon be mine ; but point out any man's
In all the shire, and say they lie convenient,
And useful for your lordship, and once more
I say aloud, they are yours.
LOV. : I dare not own
What's by unjust and cruel means extorted ;
My fame and credit are more dear to me,
Than so to expose them to be censured by
The public voice.
OVER. : You run, my lord, no hazard.
Your reputation shall stand as fair,

In all good men's opinions, as now ;
Nor can my actions, though condemn'd for ill,
Cast any foul aspersion upon yours.
For, though I do contemn report myself,
As a mere sound, I still will be so tender
Of what concerns you, in all points of honour,
That the immaculate whiteness of your fame,
Nor your unquestioned integrity,
Shall e'er be sullied with one taint or spot
That may take from your innocence and candour.
All my ambition is to have my daughter
Right honourable, which my lord can make her :
And might if I live to dance upon my knee
A young lord Lovell, born by her unto you,
I write *nil ultra* to my proudest hopes.
As for possessions, and annual rents,
Equivalent to maintain you in the port
Your noble birth, and present state requires,
I do remove that burthen from your shoulders,
And take it on mine own ; for, though I ruin
The country to supply your riotous waste,
The scourge of prodigals, want, shall never find you.

Lov. : Are you not frighted with the imprecations
And curses of whole families, made wretched
By your sinister practices ?

Over. : Yes, as rocks are,
When foamy billows split themselves against
Their flinty ribs ; or as the moon is moved,
When wolves, with hunger pined, howl at her brightness.
I am of a solid temper, and, like these,
Steer on, a constant course ; with mine own sword,
If call'd into the field I can make that right,
Which fearful enemies murmur'd at as wrong.
Now, for these other piddling complaints
Breath'd out in bitterness ; as when they call me
Extortioner, tyrant, cormorant, or intruder
On my poor neighbour's right, or grand incloser
Of what was common, to my private use ;
Nay, when my ears are pierced with widows' cries,
And undone orphans wash with tears my threshold,
I only think what 'tis to have my daughter
Right honourable ; and 'tis a powerful charm
Makes me insensible of remorse, or pity,
Or the least sting of conscience.

Lov. : I admire
The toughness of your nature.

Over. : 'Tis for you,
My lord, and for my daughter, I am marble ;
Nay more, if you will have my character
In little, I enjoy more true delight,
In my arrival to my wealth these dark
And crooked ways, than you shall e'er take pleasure
In spending what my industry hath compass'd.

My haste commands me hence ; in one word, therefore,
Is it a match ?

LOV. : I hope, that is past doubt now.

OVER. : Then rest secure ; not the hate of all mankind here,
Nor fear of what can fall on me hereafter,
Shall make me study aught but your advancement
One story higher : an earl ! if gold can do it.
Dispute not my religion, nor my faith ;
Though I am borne thus headlong by my will,
You may make choice of what belief you please,
To me they are equal ; so, my lord, good morrow. [*Exit.*

LOV. : He's gone—I wonder how the earth can bear
Such a portént ! I, that have lived a soldier,
And stood the enemy's violent charge undaunted,
To hear this blasphemous beast am bath'd all over
In a cold sweat : yet, like a mountain, he
(Confirm'd in atheistical assertions)
Is no more shaken than Olympus is
When angry Boreas loads his double head
With sudden drifts of snow.

Enter LADY ALLWORTH, WAITING WOMAN, *and* AMBLE.

L. ALL. : Save you, my lord !
Disturb I not your privacy ?

LOV. : No, good madam ;
For your own sake I am glad you came no sooner :
Since this bold bad man, sir Giles Overreach,
Made such a plain discovery of himself,
And read this morning such a devilish matins,
That I should think it a sin next to his
But to repeat it.

L. ALL. : I ne'er press'd, my lord,
On others' privacies ; yet, against my will,
Walking, for health sake, in the gallery
Adjoining to your lodgings, I was made
(So vehement and loud he was) partaker
Of his tempting offers.

LOV. : Please you to command
Your servants hence, and I shall gladly hear
Your wiser counsel.

L. ALL. : 'Tis, my lord, a woman's,
But true and hearty ;—wait in the next room,
But be within call ; yet not so near to force me
To whisper my intents.

AMB. : We are taught better
By you, good madam.

WOMAN : And well know our distance.

L. ALL. : Do so, and talk not ; 'twill become your breeding.
[*Exeunt* AMBLE *and* WOMAN.
Now, my good lord : if I may use my freedom,
As to an honour'd friend——

LOV. : You lessen else
Your favour to me.

L. All. : I dare then say thus :
As you are noble (howe'er common men
Make sordid wealth the object and sole end
Of their industrious aims) 'twill not agree
With those of eminent blood, who are engaged
More to prefer their honours, than to increase
The state left to them by their ancestors,
To study large additions to their fortunes,
And quite neglect their births —though I must grant,
Riches, well got, to be a useful servant,
But a bad master.

Lov. : Madam, 'tis confess'd ;
But what infer you from it?

L. All. : This, my lord ;
That as all wrongs, though thrust into one scale ;
Slide of themselves off, when right fills the other,
And cannot bide the trial ; so all wealth,
I mean if ill-acquired, cemented to honour
By virtuous ways achieved, and bravely purchased,
Is but as rubbish pour'd into a river,
(Howe'er intended to make good the bank,)
Rendering the water, that was pure before,
Polluted and unwholesome. I allow
The heir of sir Giles Overreach, Margaret,
A maid well qualified, and the richest match
Our north part can make boast of ; yet she cannot,
With all that she brings with her, fill their mouths,
That never will forget who was her father ;
Or that my husband Allworth's lands, and Wellborn's,
(How wrung from both needs now no repetition),
Were real motives that more work'd your lordship
To join your families, than her form and virtues :
You may conceive the rest.

Lov. : I do, sweet madam,
And long since have considered it. I know,
The sum of all that makes a just man happy
Consists in the well choosing of his wife :
And there, well to discharge it, does require
Equality of years, of birth, of fortune ;
For beauty being poor, and not cried up
By birth or wealth, can truly mix with neither.
And wealth, where there's such difference in years,
And fair descent, must make the yoke uneasy :—
But I come nearer.

L. All. : Pray you do, my lord.

Lov. : Were Overreach's states thrice centupled, his daughter
Millions of degrees much fairer than she is,
Howe'er I might urge precedents to excuse me,
I would not so adulterate my blood
By marrying Margaret, and so leave my issue
Made up of several pieces, one part scarlet,
And the other London blue. In my own tomb
I will inter my name first.

L. All. : I am glad to hear this.—— [*Aside.*
Why then, my lord, pretend your marriage to her ?
Dissimulation but ties false knots
On that straight line by which you, hitherto,
Have measured all your actions.
Lov. : I make answer,
And aptly, with a question. Wherefore have you,
That, since your husband's death, have lived a strict
And chaste nun's life, on the sudden given yourself
To visits and entertainments ? think you, madam,
'Tis not grown public conference ? or the favours
Which you too prodigally have thrown on Wellborn,
Being too reserved before, incur not censure ?
L. All. : I am innocent here ; and, on my life, I swear
My ends are good.
Lov. : On my soul, so are mine
To Margaret ; but leave both to the event :
And since this friendly privacy does serve
But as an offer'd means unto ourselves,
To search each other further, you having shewn
Your care of me, I my respect to you ;
Deny me not, but still in chaste words, madam,
An afternoon's discourse.
L. All. : So I shall hear you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Before* TAPWELL'S *House.*

Enter TAPWELL *and* FROTH.

Tap. : Undone, undone ! this was your counsel, Froth.
Froth : Mine ! I defy thee : did not master Marrall
(He has marr'd all, I am sure) strictly command us,
On pain of sir Giles Overreach's displeasure,
To turn the gentleman out of doors ?
Tap. : 'Tis true ;
But now he's his uncle's darling, and has got
Master justice Greedy, since he fill'd his belly,
At his commandment, to do anything ;
Woe, woe to us !
Froth : He may prove merciful.
Tap. : Troth, we do not deserve it at his hands.
Though he knew all the passages of our house,
As the receiving of stolen goods, and bawdry,
When he was rogue Wellborn no man would believe him,
And then his information could not hurt us ;
But now he is right worshipful again,
Who dares but doubt his testimony ? methinks,
I see thee, Froth, already in a cart,
For a close bawd, thine eyes even pelted out
With dirt and rotten eggs ; and my hand hissing,
If I scape the halter, with the letter R
Printed upon it.
Froth : Would that were the worst !
That were but nine days wonder : as for credit,
We have none to lose, but we shall lose the money
He owes us, and his custom ; there's the hell on't.

TAP. : He has summon'd all his creditors by the drum,
And they swarm about him like so many soldiers
On the pay day : and has found out such a NEW WAY
TO PAY HIS OLD DEBTS, as 'tis very likely.
He shall be chronicled for it !
FROTH : He deserves it
More than ten pageants. But are you sure his worship
Comes this way, to my lady's ?
[*A cry within :* Brave master Wellborn !
TAP. : Yes :—I hear him.
FROTH : Be ready with your petition, and present it
To his good grace.

Enter WELLBORN *in a rich habit, followed by* MARRALL, GREEDY, ORDER, FURNACE, *and* CREDITORS ; TAPWELL *kneeling, delivers his petition.*

WELL. : How's this ! petition'd too ?——
But note what miracles the payment of
A little trash, and a rich suit of clothes
Can work upon these rascals ! I shall be,
I think, prince Wellborn.
MAR. : When your worship's married,
You may be :—I know what I hope to see you.
WELL. : Then look thou for advancement.
MAR. : To be known
Your worship's bailiff, is the mark I shoot at.
WELL. : And thou shalt hit it.
MAR. : Pray you, sir, dispatch
These needy followers, and for my admittance,
Provided you'll defend me from sir Giles,
Whose service I am weary of, I'll say something
You shall give thanks for.
WELL. : Fear me not sir Giles.
GREEDY : Who, Tapwell ? I remember thy wife brought me,
Last new-year's tide, a couple of fat turkies.
TAP. : And shall do every Christmas, let your worship
But stand my friend now.
GREEDY : How ! with master Wellborn ?
I can do anything with him on such terms.—
See you this honest couple, they are good souls
As ever drew out fosset ; have they not
A pair of honest faces ?
WELL. : I o'erheard you,
And the bribe he promised. You are cozen'd in them :
For, of all the scum that grew rich by my riots,
This, for a most unthankful knave, and this,
For a base bawd and whore, have worst deserv'd me,
And therefore speak not for them : by your place
You are rather to do me justice ; lend me your ear :
—Forget his turkies, and call in his license
And, at the next fair, I'll give you a yoke of oxen
Worth all his poultry.
GREEDY : I am changed on the sudden
In my opinion ! come near ; nearer, rascal.

And, now I view him better, did you e'er see
One look so like an archknave? his very countenance,
Should an understanding judge but look upon him,
Would hang him, though he were innocent.

TAP., FROTH: Worshipful sir.

GREEDY: No, though the great Turk came, instead of turkies,
To beg my favour, I am inexorable.
Thou hast an ill name: besides thy musty ale,
That hath destroyed many of the king's liege people,
Thou never hadst in thy house, to stay men's stomachs,
A piece of Suffolk cheese, or gammon of bacon,
Or any esculent, as the learn'd call it,
For their emolument, but sheer drink only.
For which gross fault I here do damn thy license,
Forbidding thee ever to tap or draw;
For, instantly, I will, in mine own person,
Command the constable to pull down thy sign,
And do it before I eat.

FROTH: No mercy?

GREEDY: Vanish!
If I shew any, may my promised oxen gore me!

TAP.: Unthankful knaves are ever so rewarded.

[*Exeunt* GREEDY, TAPWELL, *and* FROTH.

WELL.: Speak; what are you?

1 CRED.: A decay'd vintner, sir,
That might have thrived, but that your worship broke me
With trusting you with muskadine and eggs,
And five pound suppers, with your after drinkings,
When you lodged upon the Bankside.

WELL.: I remember.

1 CRED.: I have not been hasty, not e'er laid to arrest you;
And therefore, sir——

WELL.: Thou art an honest fellow,
I'll set thee up again; see his bill paid,—
What are you?

2 CRED.: A tailor once, but now mere botcher.
I gave you credit for a suit of clothes,
Which was all my stock, but you failing in payment,
I was removed from the shopboard, and confined
Under a stall.

WELL.: See him paid; and botch no more.

2 CRED.: I ask no interest, sir.

WELL.: Such tailors need not;
If their bills are paid in one and twenty year,
They are seldom losers.—O, I know thy face,

[*To* 3 CRED.

Thou wert my surgeon: you must tell no tales;
Those days are done. I will pay you in private.

ORD.: A royal gentleman!

FURN.: Royal as an emperor!
He'll prove a brave master; my good lady knew
To choose a man.

WELL.: See all men else discharg'd;
And since old debts are clear'd by a new way,

A little bounty will not misbecome me ;
There's something, honest cook, for thy good breakfasts ;
And this, for your respect ; (*to* ORDER.) take't, 'tis good gold,
And I able to spare it.

ORD. : You are too munificent.

FURN. : He was ever so.

WELL. : Pray you, on before.

3 CRED. : Heaven bless you !

MAR. : At four o'clock ; the rest know where to meet me.
[*Exeunt* ORDER, FURNACE, *and* CREDITORS.

WELL. : Now, master Marrall, what's the weighty secret
You promised to impart ?

MAR. : Sir, time nor place
Allow me to relate each circumstance,
This only, in a word ; I know sir Giles
Will come upon you for security
For his thousand pounds, which you must not consent to.
As he grows in heat, as I am sure he will,
Be you but rough, and say he's in your debt
Ten times the sum, upon sale of your land ;
I had a hand in't (I speak it to my shame)
When you were defeated of it.

WELL. : That's forgiven.

MAR. : I shall deserve it : then urge him to produce
The deed in which you pass'd it over to him,
Which I know he'll have about him, to deliver
To the lord Lovell, with many other writings,
And present monies : I'll instruct you further,
As I wait on your worship : if I play not my prize
To your full content, and your uncle's much vexation,
Hang up Jack Marrall.

WELL. : I rely upon thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in* OVERREACH'S *House.*

Enter ALLWORTH *and* MARGARET.

ALL. : Whether to yield the first praise to my lord's
Unequall'd temperance, or your constant sweetness,
That I yet live, my weak hands fasten'd on
Hope's anchor, spite of all storms of despair,
I yet rest doubtful.

MARG. : Give it to lord Lovell ;
For what in him was bounty, in me's duty.
I make but payment of a debt to which
My vows, in that high office register'd,
Are faithful witnesses.

ALL. : 'Tis true, my dearest :
Yet, when I call to mind how many fair ones
Make wilful shipwreck of their faiths, and oaths
To God and man, to fill the arms of greatness ;
And you rise up no less than a glorious star,
To the amazement of the world,—that hold out
Against the stern authority of a father,

And spurn at honour, when it comes to court you ;
I am so tender of your good, that faintly,
With your wrong, I can wish myself that right
You yet are pleased to do me.

MARG. : Yet, and ever.
To me what's title, when content is wanting ?
Or wealth, raked up together with much care,
And to be kept with more, when the heart pines,
In being dispossess'd of what it longs for,
Beyond the Indian mines ? or the smooth brow
Of a pleased sire, that slaves me to his will ;
And so his ravenous humour may be feasted
By my obedience, and he see me great,
Leaves to my soul nor faculties nor power
To make her own election ?

ALL. : But the dangers
That follow the repulse——

MARG. : To me they are nothing ;
Let Allworth love, I cannot be unhappy.
Suppose the worst, that, in his rage, he kill me ;
A tear or two, by you dropt on my herse,
In sorrow for my fate, will call back life
So far as but to say, that I die yours ;
I then shall rest in peace : or should he prove
So cruel, as one death would not suffice
His thirst of vengeance, but with lingering torments,
In mind and body, I must waste to air,
In poverty join'd with banishment ; so you share
In my afflictions, which I dare not wish you,
So high I prize you, I could undergo them
With such a patience as should look down
With scorn on his worst malice.

ALL. : Heaven avert
Such trials of your true affection to me !
Nor will it unto you, that are all mercy,
Shew so much rigour : but since we must run
Such desperate hazards, let us do our best
To steer between them.

MARG. : Your lord's ours ; and sure ;
And though but a young actor, second me
In doing to the life what he has plotted,
Enter OVERREACH *behind.*
The end may yet prove happy. Now, my Allworth.
[*Seeing her father.*

ALL. : To your letter, and put on a seeming anger.

MARG. : I'll pay my lord all debts due to his title ;
And when with terms, not taking from his honour,
He does solicit me, I shall gladly hear him.
But in this peremptory, nay, commanding way,
T'appoint a meeting, and, without my knowledge,
A priest to tie the knot can ne'er be undone
Till death unloose it, is a confidence
In his lordship will deceive him.

ALL. : I hope better,
Good lady.
MARG. : Hope, sir, what you please : for me
I must take a safe and secure course ; I have
A father, and without his full consent,
Though all lords of the land kneel'd for my favour,
I can grant nothing.
OVER. : I like this obedience : [*Comes forward.*
But whatsoe'er my lord writes, must and shall be
Accepted and embraced. Sweet master Allworth,
You shew yourself a true and faithful servant
To your good lord ; he has a jewel of you.
How ! frowning, Meg ? are these looks to receive
A messenger from my lord ? what's this ? give me it.
MARG. : A piece of arrogant paper, like the inscriptions.
OVER. (*reads*) : *Fair mistress, from your servant learn, all joys*
That we can hope for, if deferr'd, prove toys;
Therefore this instant, and in private, meet
A husband, that will gladly at your feet
Lay down his honours, tendering them to you
With all content, the church being paid her due.
—Is this the arrogant piece of paper ? fool !
Will you still be one ? in the name of madness what
Could his good honour write more to content you ?
Is there ought else to be wish'd, after these two,
That are already offer'd ; marriage first,
And lawful pleasure after : what would you more ?
MARG. : Why, sir, I would be married like your daughter ;
Not hurried away i' the night I know not whither,
Without all ceremony ; no friends invited
To honour the solemnity.
ALL. : An't please your honour,
For so before to-morrow I must style you,
My lord desires this privacy, in respect
His honourable kinsmen are afar off,
And his desires to have it done, brook not
So long delay as to expect their coming ;
And yet he stands resolv'd, with all due pomp,
As running at the ring, plays, masks, and tilting,
To have his marriage at court celebrated,
When he has brought your honour up to London.
OVER. : He tells you true, 'tis the fashion, on my knowledge :
Yet the good lord, to please your peevishness,
Must put it off, forsooth ! and lose a night,
In which perhaps he might get two boys on thee.
Tempt me no further, if you do, this goad
[*Points to his sword.*
Shall prick you to him.
MARG. : I could be contented,
Were you but by, to do a father's part,
And give me in the church.
OVER. : So my lord have you,
What do I care who gives you ? since my lord
Does purpose to be private, I'll not cross him.

I know not, master Allworth, how my lord
May be provided, and therefore there's a purse
Of gold, 'twill serve this night's expense ; to-morrow
I'll furnish him with any sums : in the mean time,
Use my ring to my chaplain ; he is beneficed
At my manor of Got'em, and call'd parson Willdo :
'Tis no matter for a license, I'll bear him out in't.

MARG. : With your favour, sir, what warrant is your ring ?
He may suppose I got that twenty ways,
Without your knowledge ; and then to be refused,
Were such a stain upon me !—if you pleased, sir,
Your presence would do better.

OVER. : Still perverse !
I say again, I will not cross my lord ;
Yet I'll prevent you too.—Paper and ink, there !

ALL. : I can furnish you.

OVER. : I thank you, I can write then. [*Writes.*

ALL. : You may, if you please, put out the name of my lord,
In respect he comes diguised, and only write,
Marry her to this gentleman.

OVER. : Well advised.
'Tis done ; away ;—(MARGARET *kneels*). My blessing, girl ? thou hast it.
Nay, no reply, be gone :—good master Allworth,
This shall be the best night's work you ever made.

ALL. : I hope so, sir.

[*Exeunt* ALLWORTH *and* MARGARET.

OVER. : Farewell !—Now all's cocksure :
Methinks I hear already knights and ladies
Say, Sir Giles Overreach, how is it with
Your honourable daughter ! has her honour
Slept well to-night ? or, will her honour please
To accept this monkey, dog, or paroqueto,
(This is state in ladies,) or my eldest son
To be her page, and wait upon her trencher ?
My ends, my ends are compass'd—then for Wellborn
And the lands ; were he once married to the widow——
I have him here—I can scarce contain myself,
I am so full of joy, nay, joy all over. [*Exit.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—*A Room in* LADY ALLWORTH'S *House.*

Enter LORD LOVELL, LADY ALLWORTH, *and* AMBLE.

L. ALL. : By this you know how strong the motives were
That did, my lord, induce me to dispense
A little, with my gravity, to advance
In personating some few favours to him,
The plots and projects of the down-trod Wellborn.
Nor shall I e'er repent, although I suffer
In some few men's opinions for't, the action ;
For he that ventured all for my dear husband,
Might justly claim an obligation from me,

To pay him such a courtesy ; which had I
Coyly, or over-curiously denied,
It might have argued me of little love
To the deceased.

Lov. : What you intended, Madam,
For the poor gentleman, hath found good success ;
For, as I understand, his debts are paid,
And he once more furnish'd for fair employment :
But all the arts that I have used to raise
The fortunes of your joy and mine, young Allworth,
Stand yet in supposition, though I hope well :
For the young lovers are in wit more pregnant
Than their years can promise ; and for their desires,
On my knowledge, they are equal.

L. All. : As my wishes
Are with yours, my lord ; yet give me leave to fear
The building, though well grounded : to deceive
Sir Giles, that's both a lion and a fox
In his proceedings, were a work beyond
The strongest undertakers ; not the trial
Of two weak innocents.

Lov. : Despair not, madam :
Hard things are compass'd oft by easy means ;
And judgment, being a gift derived from heaven,
Though sometimes lodged in the hearts of worldly men,
That ne'er consider from whom they receive it,
Forsakes such as abuse the giver of it.
Which is the reason that the politic
And cunning statesman, that believes he fathoms
The counsels of all kingdoms on the earth,
Is by simplicity oft over-reach'd.

L. All. : May he be so ! yet, in his name to express it,
Is a good omen.

Lov. : May it to myself
Prove so, good lady, in my suit to you !
What think you of the motion ?

L. All. : Troth, my lord,
My own unworthiness may answer for me ;
For had you, when that I was in my prime,
My virgin flower uncropp'd, presented me
With this great favour ; looking on my lowness
Not in a glass of self-love, but of truth,
I could not but have thought it, as a blessing
Far, far beyond my merit.

Lov. : You are too modest,
And undervalue that which is above
My title, or whatever I call mine.
I grant, were I a Spaniard, to marry
A widow might disparage me ; but being
A true-born Englishman, I cannot find
How it can taint my honour : nay, what's more,
That which you think a blemish, is to me
The fairest lustre. You already, madam,

Have given sure proofs how dearly you can cherish
A husband that deserves you ; which confirms me,
That, if I am not wanting in my care
To do you service, you'll be still the same
That you were to your Allworth : in a word,
Our years, our states, our births are not unequal,
You being descended nobly, and allied so ;
If then you may be won to make me happy,
But join your lips to mine, and that shall be
A solemn contract.

L. ALL. : I were blind to my own good,
Should I refuse it ; (*kisses him*) yet, my lord, receive me
As such a one, the study of whose whole life
Shall know no other object but to please you.

LOV. : If I return not, with all tenderness,
Equal respect to you, may I die wretched !

L. ALL. : There needs no protestation, my lord,
To her that cannot doubt.—

Enter WELLBORN, *handsomely apparelled.*

You are welcome, sir.
Now you look like yourself.

WELL. : And will continue
Such in my free acknowledgment, that I am
Your creature, madam, and will never hold
My life mine own, when you please to command it.

LOV. : It is a thankfulness that well becomes you ;
You could not make choice of a better shape
To dress your mind in.

L. ALL. : For me, I am happy
That my endeavours prosper'd. Saw you of late
Sir Giles, your uncle ?

WELL. : I heard of him, madam,
By his minister, Marrall ; he's grown into strange passions
About his daughter : this last night he look'd for
Your lordship at his house, but missing you,
And she not yet appearing, his wise head
Is much perplex'd and troubled.

LOV. : It may be,
Sweetheart, my project took.

L. ALL. : I strongly hope.

OVER. (*within*) : Ha ! find her, booby, thou huge lump of nothing,
I'll bore thine eyes out else.

WELL. : May it please your lordship,
For some ends of mine own, but to withdraw
A little out of sight, though not of hearing,
You may, perhaps, have sport.

LOV. : You shall direct me. [*Steps aside.*

Enter OVERREACH, *with distracted looks, driving in* MARRALL *before him, with a box.*

OVER. : I shall sol fa you, rogue !

MAR. : Sire, for what cause
Do you use me thus ?

OVER. : Cause, slave ! why, I am angry,
And thou a subject only fit for beating,
And so to cool my choler. Look to the writing ;
Let but the seal be broke upon the box,
That has slept in my cabinet these three years,
I'll rack thy soul for't.

MAR. : I may yet cry quittance,
Though now I suffer, and dare not resist. [*Aside.*

OVER. : Lady, by your leave, did you see my daughter, lady ?
And the lord her husband ? are they in your house ?
If they are, discover, that I may bid them joy ;
And, as an entrance to her place of honour,
See your ladyship on her left hand, and make courtsies
When she nods on you ; which you must receive
As a special favour.

L. ALL. : When I know, sir Giles,
Her state requires such ceremony, I shall pay it ;
But, in the meantime, as I am myself,
I give you to understand, I neither know
Nor care where her honour is.

OVER. : When you once see her
Supported, and led by the lord her husband,
You'll be taught better,—Nephew.

WELL. : Sir.

OVER. : No more !

WELL. : 'Tis all I owe you.

OVER. : Have your redeem'd rags
Made you thus insolent ?

WELL. : Insolent to you !
Why, what are you, sir, unless in your years,
At the best, more than myself ?

OVER. : His fortune swells him :
'Tis rank, he's married. [*Aside.*

L. ALL. : This is excellent !

OVER. : Sir, in calm language, though I seldom use it,
I am familiar with the cause that makes you
Bear up thus bravely ; there's a certain buzz
Of a stolen marriage, do you hear ? of a stolen marriage,
In which, 'tis said, there's somebody hath been cozen'd ;
I name no parties.

WELL. : Well, sir, and what follows ?

OVER. : Marry, this ; since you are peremptory. Remember,
Upon mere hope of your great match, I lent you
A thousand pounds : put me in good security,
And suddenly, by mortgage or by statute,
Of some of your new possessions, or I'll have you
Dragg'd in your lavender robes to t'ıe gaol : you know me,
And therefore do not trifle.

WELL. : Can you be
So cruel to your nephew, now he's in
The way to rise ? was this the courtesy
You did me *in pure love, and no ends else ?*

OVER. : End me no ends ! engage the whole estate,
And force your spouse to sign it, you shall have
Three or four thousand more, to roar and swagger,
And revel in bawdy taverns.

WELL. : And beg after ;
Mean you not so ?

OVER. : My thoughts are mine, and free.
Shall I have security ?

WELL. : No, indeed you shall not,
Nor bond, nor bill, nor bare acknowledgment ;
Your great looks fright not me.

OVER. : But my deeds shall.
Outbraved ! [*Both draw.*

L. ALL. : Help, murder ! murder !

Enter SERVANTS.

WELL. : Let him come on,
With all his wrongs and injuries about him,
Arm'd with his cut-throat practices to guard him ;
The right that I bring with me will defend me,
And punish his extortion.

OVER. : That I had thee
But single in the field !

L. ALL. : You may : but make not
My house your quarrelling scene.

OVER. : Were't in a church,
By heaven and hell, I'll do't.

MAR. : Now put him to
The shewing of the deed. [*Aside to* WELLBORN.

WELL. : This rage is vain, sir ;
For fighting, fear not, you shall have your hands full,
Upon the least incitement ; and whereas
You charge me with a debt of a thousand pounds,
If there be law, (howe'er you have no conscience,)
Either restore my land, or I'll recover
A debt, that's truly due to me from you,
In value ten times more than what you challenge.

OVER. : I in thy debt ! O impudence ! did I not purchase
The land left by thy father, that rich land,
That had continued in Wellborn's name
Twenty descents ; which, like a riotous fool,
Thou didst make sale of ? Is not here, inclosed,
The deed that does confirm it mine ?

MAR. : Now, now !

WELL. : I do acknowledge none ; I ne'er pass'd over
Any such land : I grant, for a year or two
You had it in trust ; which if you do discharge,
Surrendering the possession, you shall ease
Yourself and me of chargeable suits in law,
Which, if you prove not honest, as I doubt it,
Must of necessity follow.

L. ALL. : In my judgment,
He does advise you well.

OVER. : Good ! good ! conspire
With your new husband, lady ; second him
In his dishonest practices ; but when
This manor is extended to my use,
You'll speak in an humbler key, and sue for favour.
L. ALL. : Never : do not hope it.
WELL. : Let despair first seize me.
OVER. : Yet, to shut up thy mouth, and make thee give
Thyself the lie, the loud lie, I draw out
The precious evidence : if thou canst forswear
Thy hand and seal, and make a forfeit of
[*Opens the box, and displays the bond.*
Thy ears to the pillory, see ! here's that will make
My interest clear—ha !
L. ALL. : A fair skin of parchment.
WELL. : Indented, I confess, and labels too ;
But neither wax nor words. How ! thunder struck ?
Not a syllable to insult with ? My wise uncle,
Is this your precious evidence, this that makes
Your interest clear ?
OVER. : I am o'erwhelmed with wonder !
What prodigy is this ? what subtle devil
Hath razed out the inscription ? the wax
Turn'd into dust !—the rest of my deeds whole,
As when they were deliver'd, and this only
Made nothing ! do you deal with witches, rascal ?
There is a statute for you, which will bring
Your neck in an hempen circle : yes, there is ;
And now 'tis better thought for, cheater, know
This juggling shall not save you.
WELL. : To save thee,
Would beggar the stock of mercy.
OVER. : Marrall !
MAR. : Sir.
OVER. : Though the witnesses are dead, your testimony
Help with an oath or two : and for thy master,
Thy liberal master, my good honest servant,
I know thou wilt swear anything, to dash
This cunning sleight : besides, I know thou art
A public notary, and such stand in law
For a dozen witnesses : the deed being drawn too
By thee, my careful Marrall, and deliver'd
When thou wert present, will make good my title.
Wilt thou not swear this ? [*Aside to* MARRALL.
MAR. : I ! no, I assure you :
I have a conscience not sear'd up like yours ;
I know no deeds.
OVER. : Wilt thou betray me ?
MAR. : Keep him
From using of his hands, I'll use my tongue,
To his no little torment.
OVER. : Mine own varlet
Rebel against me !

MAR. : Yes, and uncase you too.
The *ideot*, the *patch*, the *slave*, the *booby*,
The *property fit only to be beaten*
For your morning exercise, your *football*, or
The *unprofitable lump of flesh*, your *drudge ;*
Can now anatomise you, and lay open
All your black plots, and level with the earth
Your hill of pride : and, with these gabions guarded,
Unload my great artillery, and shake,
Nay pulverize, the wall you think defend you.
L. ALL. : How he foams at the mouth with rage !
WELL. : To him again.
OVER. : O that I had thee in my gripe, I would tear thee
Joint after joint !
MAR. : I know you are a tearer.
But I'll have first your fangs pared off, and then
Come nearer to you ; when I have discover'd,
And made it good before the judge, what ways,
And devilish practices, you used to cozen with
An army of whole families, who yet alive,
And but enroll'd for soldiers, were able
To take in Dunkirk.
WELL. : All will come out.
L. ALL. : The better.
OVER. : But that I will live, rogue, to torture thee,
And make thee wish, and kneel in vain, to die,
These swords, that keep thee from me, should fix here,
Although they made my body but one wound,
But I would reach thee.
LOV. : Heaven's hand is in this ;
One bandog worry the other ! [*Aside.*
OVER. : I play the fool,
And make my anger but ridiculous :
There will be a time and place, there will be, cowards,
When you shall feel what I dare do.
WELL. : I think so :
You dare do any ill, yet want true valour
To be honest, and repent.
OVER. : They are words I know not,
Nor e'er will learn. Patience, the beggar's virtue,

Enter GREEDY *and* PARSON WILLDO.

Shall find no harbour here :—after these storms
At length a calm appears. Welcome, most welcome !
There's comfort in thy looks ; is the deed done ?
Is my daughter married ? say but so, my chaplain,
And I am tame.
WILLDO : Married ! yes, I assure you.
OVER. : Then vanish all sad thoughts ! there's more gold for thee.
My doubts and fears are in the titles drown'd
Of my honourable, my right honourable daughter.
GREEDY : Here will be feasting ! at least for a month,
I am provided : empty guts, croak no more,

You shall be stuff'd like bagpipes, not with wind,
But bearing dishes.
OVER. : Instantly be here ?

[*Whispering to* WILLDO.

To my wish ! to my wish ! Now you that plot against me,
And hoped to trip my heels up, that contemn'd me,
Think on't and tremble :—(*loud music.*)—they come ! I hear the music.
A lane there for my lord !
WELL. : This sudden heat
May yet be cool'd, sir.
OVER. : Make way there for my lord !

Enter ALLWORTH *and* MARGARET.

MARG. : Sir, first your pardon, then your blessing, with
Your full allowance of the choice I have made.
As ever you could make use of your reason, [*Kneeling.*
Grow not in passion ; since you may as well
Call back the day that's past, as untie the knot
Which is too strongly fasten'd : not to dwell
Too long on words, this is my husband.
OVER. : How !
ALL. : So I assure you ; all the rights of marriage,
With every circumstance, are past. Alas ! sir,
Although I am no lord, but a lord's page,
Your daughter and my loved wife mourns not for it ;
And, for right honourable son-in-law, you may say,
Your dutiful daughter.
OVER. : Devil ! are they married ?
WILLDO : Do a father's part, and say, Heaven give them joy !
OVER. : Confusion and ruin ! speak, and speak quickly,
Or thou art dead.
WILLDO : They are married.
OVER. : Thou hadst better
Have made a contract with the king of fiends,
Than these :—my brain turns !
WILLDO : Why this rage to me ?
Is not this your letter, sir, and these the words ?
Marry her to this gentleman.
OVER. : It cannot—
Nor will I e'er believe it, 'sdeath ! I will not ;
That I, that, in all passages I touch'd
At worldly profit, have not left a print
Where I have trod, for the most curious search
To trace my footsteps, should be gull'd by children,
Baffled and fool'd, and all my hopes and labours
Defeated, and made void.
WELL. : As it appears,
You are so, my grave uncle.
OVER. : Village nurses
Revenge their wrongs with curses ; I'll not waste
A syllable, but thus I take the life
Which, wretched, I gave to thee.

[*Attempts to kill* MARGARET.

LOV. (*coming forward*) : Hold, for your own sake !
Though charity to your daughter hath quite left you,
Will you do an act, though in your hopes lost here,
Can leave no hope for peace or rest hereafter ?
Consider ; at the best you are but a man,
And cannot so create your aims, but that
They may be cross'd.

OVER. : Lord ! thus I spit at thee,
And at thy counsel ; and again desire thee,
And as thou art a soldier, if thy valour
Dares shew itself, where multitude and example
Lead not the way, let's quit the house, and change
Six words in private.

LOV. : I am ready.

L. ALL. : Stay, sir,
Contest with one distracted !

WELL. : You'll grow like him,
Should you answer his vain challenge.

OVER. : Are you pale ?
Borrow his help, though Hercules call it odds,
I'll stand against both as I am, hemm'd in thus.—
Since, like a Libyan lion in the toil,
My fury cannot reach the coward hunters,
And only spends itself, I'll quit the place :
Alone I can do nothing ; but I have servants,
And friends to second me ; and if I make not
This house a heap of ashes, (by my wrongs,
What I have spoke I will make good !) or leave
One throat uncut,—if it be possible,
Hell, add to my afflictions ! [*Exit.*

MAR. : Is't not brave sport ?

GREEDY : Brave sport ! I am sure it has ta'en away
my stomach ;
I do not like the sauce.

ALL. : Nay, weep not, dearest,
Though it express your pity ; what's decreed
Above, we cannot alter.

L. ALL. : His threats move me
No scruple, madam.

MAR. : Was it not a rare trick,
An it please your worship, to make the deed nothing ?
I can do twenty neater, if you please
To purchase and grow rich ; for I will be
Such a solicitor and steward for you,
As never worshipful had.

WELL. : I do believe thee ;
But first discover the quaint means you used
To raze out the conveyance ?

MAR. : They are mysteries
Not to be spoke in public : certain minerals
Incorporated in the ink and wax.—
Besides, he gave me nothing, but still fed me
With hopes and blows ; and that was the inducement

To this conundrum. If it please your worship
To call to memory, this mad beast once caused me
To urge you, or to drown or hang yourself ;
I'll do the like to him, if you command me.

WELL. : You are a rascal ! he that dares be false
To a master, though unjust, will ne'er be true
To any other. Look not for reward
Or favour from me ; I will shun thy sight
As I would do a basilisk's : thank my pity,
If thou keep thy ears ; howe'er, I will take order
Your practice shall be silenced.

GREEDY : I'll commit him,
If you will have me, sir.

WELL. : That were to little purpose ;
His conscience be his prison. Not a word,
But instantly be gone.

ORD. : Take this kick with you.

AMB. : And this.

FURN. : If that I had my cleaver here,
I would divide your knave's head.

MAR. : This is the haven
False servants still arrive at. [*Exit.*

Re-enter OVERREACH.

L. ALL. : Come again !

LOV. : Fear not, I am your guard.

WELL. : His looks are ghastly.

WILLDO : Some little time I have spent, under your favours,
In physical studies, and if my judgment err not,
He's mad beyond recovery : but observe him,
And look to yourselves.

OVER. : Why, is not the whole world
Included in myself ? to what use then
Are friends and servants ? Say there were a squadron
Of pikes, lined through with shot, when I am mounted
Upon my injuries, shall I fear to charge them ?
No : I'll through the battalia, and that routed,
[*Flourishing his sword sheathed.*
I'll fall to execution.—Ha ! I am feeble :
Some undone widow sits upon mine arm,
And takes away the use of't ; and my sword,
Glued to my scabbard, with wrong'd orphans' tears,
Will not be drawn. Ha ! what are these ? sure, hangmen,
That come to bind my hands, and then to drag me
Before the judgment-seat : now they are new shapes,
And do appear like Furies, with steel whips
To scourge my ulcerous soul. Shall I then fall
Ingloriously, and yield ? no ; spite of Fate,
I will be forced to hell like to myself.
Though you were legions of accursed spirits,
Thus would I fly among you.
[*Rushes forward, and flings himself on the ground.*

WELL. : There's no help ;
Disarm him first, then bind him.

GREEDY : Take a mittimus,
And carry him to Bedlam.
LOV. : How he foams !
WELL. : And bites the earth !
WILLDO : Carry him to some dark room,
There try what art can do for his recovery.
MARG. : O my dear father !
[*They force* OVERREACH *off.*
ALL. : You must be patient, mistress.
LOV. : Here is a precedent to teach wicked men,
That when they leave religion, and turn atheists,
Their own abilities leave them. Pray you take comfort,
I will endeavour you shall be his guardians
In his distractions : and for your land, master Wellborn,
Be it good or ill in law, I'll be an umpire
Between you, and this, the undoubted heir
Of sir Giles Overreach : for me, here's the anchor
That I must fix on.
ALL. : What you shall determine,
My lord, I will allow of.
WELL. : 'Tis the language
That I speak too ; but there is something else
Beside the repossession of my land,
And payment of my debts, that I must practise.
I had a reputation, but 'twas lost
In my loose course ; and until I redeem it
Some noble way, I am but half made up.
It is a time of action ; if your lordship
Will please to confer a company upon me.
In your command, I doubt not, in my service
To my king and country, but I shall do something
That may make me right again.
LOV. : Your suit is granted,
And you loved for the motion,
WELL. (*coming forward*) : *Nothing wants then*
But your allowance—and in that our all
Is comprehended ; it being known, nor we,
Nor he that wrote the comedy, can be free,
Without your manumission ; which if you
Grant willingly, as a fair favour due
To the poet's, and our labours, (as you may,)
For we despair not, gentlemen, of the play :
We jointly shall profess your grace hath might
To teach us action, and him how to write. [Exeunt.

1612

THE WHITE DEVIL
OR VITTORIA COROMBONA
(By JOHN WEBSTER)

It is usual to classify John Webster (1580 ?–1625 ?) and his immediate comrades Tourneur and Ford as decadent or degenerate. These are impressive words. The impression is of disapproval.

Certainly the Elizabethan drama decayed during the period of their greatest activity. Decay was to be expected. Time exacts change, and a high pressure is fairly likely to subside sooner or later. The high pressure is maintained—is intensified—in Webster and his "school." The appeal of the Elizabethan drama was to the senses. In the early unsophisticated days, straightforward blood and thunder produced the requisite shock. During the years of Shakespeare's prime (whether by way of cause or effect) England grew up. Life was discovered to be complicated—not a regular chessboard of black and white. Webster illustrates the theatrical reaction to this development. The theatre was good enough for him. He was not a Shakespeare. He had immense dramatic power, and he adapted it to the traditional uses. He aimed at the senses : subtilised senses, modern senses. He shocks those senses. That is to put his achievement at its lowest. The word decadent, in that connection, is meaningless. Fundamentally, he is conventional—as, fundamentally, most great artists are conventional. True, there are conventions and conventions. . . .

Webster is definitely indentified with some half-dozen plays, but only two—*The Duchess of Malfi* and *The White Devil* are Webster.

We know even less about him than about most Elizabethan dramatists. He may have been born in 1580 ; his body may have died in 1625.

THE WHITE DEVIL
or
Vittoria Corombona

Characters

MONTICELSO, *a Cardinal, afterwards Pope*
FRANCISCO DE MEDICIS, *Duke of Florence*
BRACHIANO, *otherwise* PAULO GIORDANO URSINI, *Duke of Brachiano, Husband of Isabella*
GIOVANNI, *his Son by Isabella*
COUNT LODOVICO
CAMILLO, *Husband of Vittoria*
FLAMINEO, *Brother of Vittoria, Secretary to Brachiano*
MARCELLO, *Brother of Vittoria, Attendant on Francisco de Medicis*
HORTENSIO, *an officer of Brachiano*
ANTONELLI, GASPARO, *Friends of Count Lodovico*
A YOUNG LORD
*GUIDANTONIO, *an Attendant on Isabella*
DOCTOR JULIO
CONJURER
LAWYER
*JAQUES, *a Moor, Servant to Giovanni*
*CHRISTOPHERO, *an attendant on Doctor Julio*
AMBASSADORS, PHYSICIANS, OFFICERS, ATTENDANTS, &C.
ISABELLA, *Sister of Francisco de Medicis, Wife of Brachiano*
VITTORIA COROMBONA, *married first to Camillo, afterwards to Brachiano*
CORNELIA, *Mother of Vittoria, Flamineo, and Marcello*
ZANCHE, *a Moor, Waiting-woman to Vittoria*
MATRON OF THE HOUSE OF CONVERTITIES

*Mutæ personæ

Scene.—ROME, AFTERWARDS PADUA

ACT I

SCENE I.—*A Street in Rome.*

Enter COUNT LODOVICO, ANTONELLI, *and* GASPARO.

LODOVICO : Banished ?
ANTONELLI : It grieved me much to hear the sentence.
LODOVICO : Ha, ha ! O Democritus, thy gods
That govern the whole world—courtly reward
And punishment ! Fortune's a right whore :
If she give aught, she deals it in small parcels,
That she may take away all at one swoop.
This 'tis to have great enemies :—God quit them !
Your wolf no longer seems to be a wolf
Than when she's hungry.
GASPARO : You term those enemies
Are men of princely rank.
LODOVICO : O, I pray for them.
The violent thunder is adored by those
Are pashed in pieces by it.
ANTONELLI : Come, my lord,
You are justly doomed : look but a little back
Into your former life ; you have in three years
Ruined the noblest earldom.
GASPARO : Yours followers
Have swallowed you like mummia and, being sick
With such unnatural and horrid physic,
Vomit you up i' the kennel.
ANTONELLI : All the damnable degrees
Of drinkings have you staggered through : one citizen
Is lord of two fair manors called you master
Only for caviare.
GASPARO : Those noblemen
Which were invited to your prodigal feasts
(Wherein the phœnix scarce could scape your throats)
Laugh at your misery ; as fore-deeming you
An idle meteor, which, drawn forth the earth,
Would be soon lost i' the air ;—
ANTONELLI : Jest upon you,
And say you were begotten in an earthquake,
You have ruined such fair lordships.
LODOVICO : Very good.
This well goes with two buckets : I must tend
The pouring out of either.
GASPARO : Worse than these ;
You have acted certain murders here in Rome,
Bloody and full of horror.
LODOVICO : 'Las,—they were flea-bitings.
Why took they not my head, then ?
GASPARO : Oh, my lord,
The law doth sometimes mediate, thinks it good
Not ever to steep violent sins in blood :
This gentle penance may both end your crimes,
And in the example better these bad times.

LODOVICO : So ; but I wonder, then, some great men scape
This banishment : there's Paulo Giordano Ursini,
The Duke of Brachiano, now lives in Rome,
And by close panderism seeks to prostitute
The honour of Vittoria Corombona ;
Vittoria, she that might have got my pardon
For one kiss to the duke.
ANTONELLI : Have a full man within you.
We see that trees bear no such pleasant fruit
There were they grew first as where they are new set :
Perfumes, the more they are chafed, the more they render
Their pleasing scents ; and so affliction
Expresseth virtue fully, whether true
Or else adulterate.
LODOVICO : Leave your painted comforts :
I'll make Italian cut-works in their guts,
If ever I return.
GASPARO : O, sir !
LODOVICO : I am patient.
I have seen some ready to be executed
Give pleasant looks and money, and grown familiar
With the knave hangman : so do I, I thank them,
And would account them nobly merciful,
Would they dispatch me quickly.
ANTONELLI : Fare you well :
We shall find time, I doubt not, to repeal
Your banishment.
LODOVICO : I am ever bound to you :
This is the world's alms ; pray, make use of it.
Great men sell sheep thus to be cut in pieces,
When first they have shorn them bare and sold their fleeces.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* CAMILLO'S *House.*

Sennet. Enter BRACHIANO, CAMILLO, FLAMINEO, VITTORIA COROMBONA, *and* ATTENDANTS.

BRACHIANO : Your best of rest !
VITTORIA : Unto my lord the duke
The best of welcome !—More lights ! attend the duke.
[*Exeunt* CAMILLO *and* VITTORIA.
BRACHIANO : Flamineo,—
FLAMINEO : My lord ?
BRACHIANO : Quite lost, Flamineo !
FLAMINEO : Pursue your noble wishes, I am prompt
As lightning to your service. O, my lord,
(*Whispers*) The fair Vittoria, my happy sister,
Shall give you present audience.—Gentlemen,
Let the caroche go on ; and 'tis his pleasure
You put out all your torches, and depart. [*Exeunt* ATTENDANTS.
BRACHIANO : Are we so happy ?
FLAMINEO : Can't be otherwise ?
Observed you not to-night, my honoured lord,
Which way soe'er you went, she threw her eyes ?

I have dealt already with her chambermaid,
Zanche the Moor ; and she is wondrous proud
To be the agent for so high a spirit.

BRACHIANO : We are happy above thought, because 'bove merit.

FLAMINEO : 'Bove merit !—we may now talk freely—'bove merit ! What is't you doubt ? her coyness ? that's but the superficies of lust most women have : yet why should ladies blush to hear that named which they do not fear to handle ? Oh, they are politic : they know our desire is increased by the difficulty of enjoying ; where a satiety is a blunt, weary, and drowsy passion. If the buttery-hatch at court stood continually open, there would be nothing so passionate crowding, nor hot suit after the beverage.

BRACHIANO : Oh, but her jealous husband !

FLAMINEO : Hang him ! a gilder that hath his brains perished with quicksilver is not more cold in the liver : the great barriers moulted not more feathers than he hath shed hairs, by the confession of his doctor : an Irish gamester that will play himself naked, and then wage all downward at hazard, is not more venturous : so unable to please a woman, that, like a Dutch doublet, all his back is shrunk into his breeches.
Shrowd you within this closet, good my lord :
Some trick now must be thought on to divide
My brother-in-law from his fair bedfellow.

BRACHIANO : Oh, should she fail to come !

FLAMINEO : I must not have your lordship thus unwisely amorous. I myself have loved a lady, and pursued her with a great deal of under-age protestation, whom some three or four gallants that have enjoyed would with all their hearts have been glad to have been rid of. 'Tis just like a summer birdcage in a garden ; the birds that are without despair to get in, and the birds that are within despair, and are in a consumption, for fear they shall never get out. Away, away, my lord !

[*Exit* BRACHIANO.

See, here he comes. This fellow by his apparel
Some men would judge a politician ;
But call his wit in question—you shall find it
Merely an ass in's foot-cloth.

Re-enter CAMILLO.

How now, brother ?
What, travelling to bed to your kind wife ?

CAMILLO : I assure you, brother, no ; my voyage lies
More northerly, in a far colder clime :
I do not well remember, I protest,
When I last lay with her.

FLAMINEO : Strange you should lose your count.

CAMILLO : We never lay together, but ere morning
There grew a flaw between us.

FLAMINEO : 'T had been your part
To have made up that flaw.

CAMILLO : True, but she loathes
I should be seen in't.

FLAMINEO : Why, sir, what's the matter ?

CAMILLO : The duke, your master, visits me, I thank him :
And I perceive how, like an earnest bowler,
He very passionately leans that way
He should have his bowl run.
FLAMINEO : I hope you do not think—
CAMILLO : That noblemen bowl booty ? faith, his cheek
Hath a most excellent bias ; it would fain
Jump with my mistress.
FLAMINEO : Will you be an ass,
Despite your Aristotle ? or a cuckold,
Contrary to your Ephemerides,
Which shows you under what a smiling planet
You were first swaddled ?
CAMILLO : Pew-wew, sir, tell not me
Of planets nor of Ephemerides :
A man may be made cuckold in the day-time,
When the stars' eyes are out.
FLAMINEO : Sir, God b' wi' you ;
I do commit you to your pitiful pillow
Stuffed with horn-shavings.
CAMILLO : Brother.—
FLAMINEO : God refuse me !
Might I advise you now, your only course
Were to lock up your wife ;—
CAMILLO : 'Twere very good.
FLAMINEO : Bar her the sight of revels ;—
CAMILLO : Excellent.
FLAMINEO : Let her not go to church, but like a hound
In lyam at your heels ;—
CAMILLO : 'Twere for her honour.
FLAMINEO : And so you should be certain in one fortnight
Despite her chastity or innocence,
To be cuckolded, which yet is in suspense :
This is my counsel, and I ask no fee for 't.
CAMILLO : Come, you know not where my nightcap wrings me.
FLAMINEO : Wear it o' the old fashion ; let your large ears come through, it will be more easy :—nay, I will be bitter. Bar your wife of her entertainment ? Women are more willing and more gloriously chaste when they are least restrained of their liberty. It seems you would be a fine capricious mathematically jealous coxcomb ; take the height of your own horns with a Jacob's staff afore they are up. These politic inclosures for paltry mutton make more rebellion in the flesh than all the provocative electuaries doctors have uttered since last jubilee.
CAMILLO : This doth not physic me.
FLAMINEO : It seems you are jealous : I'll show you the error of it by a familiar example. I have seen a pair of spectacles fashioned with such perspective art, that, lay down but one twelve pence o' the board, 'twill appear as if there were twenty ; now, should you wear a pair of these spectacles, and see your wife tying her shoe, you would imagine twenty hands were taking up of your wife's clothes, and this would put you into a horrible causeless fury.

CAMILLO : The fault there, sir, is not in the eyesight.

FLAMINEO : True ; but they that have the yellow jaundice think all objects they look on to be yellow. Jealousy is worser ; her fits present to a man, like so many bubbles in a basin of water, twenty several crabbed faces ; many times makes his own shadow his cuckold-maker. See, she comes.

Re-enter VITTORIA.

What reason have you to be jealous of this creature ? what an ignorant ass or fluttering knave might he be counted, that should write sonnets to her eyes, or call her brow the snow of Ida or ivory of Corinth, or compare her hair to the blackbird's bill, when 'tis liker the blackbird's feather ! This is all ; be wise, I will make you friends ; and you shall go to bed together. Marry, look you, it shall not be your seeking ; do you stand upon that by any means : walk you aloof ; I would not have you seen in't. (*Camillo retires.*) Sister (my lord attends you in the banqueting-house) ; your husband is wondrous discontented.

VITTORIA : I did nothing to displease him : I carved to him at supper-time.

FLAMINEO : (You need not have carved him, in faith ; they say he is a capon already. I must now seemingly fall out with you.) Shall a gentleman so well descended as Camillo, (a lousy slave, that within this twenty years rode with the black guard in the duke's carriage, 'mongst spits and dripping-pans)—

CAMILLO : Now he begins to tickle her.

FLAMINEO : An excellent scholar,—(one that hath a head filled with calves' brains without any sage in them),—come crouching in the hams to you for a night's lodging ?—(that hath an itch in 's hams, which like the fire at the glass-house hath not gone out this seven years.)—Is he not a courtly gentleman ?—(when he wears white satin, one would take him by his black muzzle to be no other creature than a maggot.)—You are a goodly foil, I confess, well set out—(but covered with a false stone, yon counterfeit diamond.)

CAMILLO : He will make her know what is in me.

FLAMINEO : (Come, my lord attends you ; thou shalt go to bed to my lord)—

CAMILLO : Now he comes to 't.

FLAMINEO : (With a relish as curious as a vintner going to taste new wine.)—[*To* CAMILLO.] I am opening your case hard.

CAMILLO : A virtuous brother, o' my credit !

FLAMINEO : He will give thee a ring with a philosopher's stone in it.

CAMILLO : Indeed, I am studying alchymy.

FLAMINEO : Thou shalt lie in a bed stuffed with turtles' feathers ; swoon in perfumed linen, like the fellow was smothered in roses. So perfect shall be thy happiness, that as men at sea think land and trees and ships go that way they go, so both heaven and earth shall seem to go your voyage. (Shalt meet him ; 'tis fixed with nails of diamonds to inevitable necessity.)

VITTORIA : How shall 's rid him hence ?

FLAMINEO : I will put the brees in 's tail—set him gadding presently.—(*To* CAMILLO.) I have almost wrought her to it, I find her coming : but, might I advise you now, for this night I

would not lie with her ; I would cross her humour to make her more humble.

CAMILLO : Shall I, shall I ?

FLAMINEO : It will show in you a supremacy of judgement.

CAMILLO : True, and a mind differing from the tumultuary opinion ; for, *quae negata, grata.*

FLAMINEO : Right : you are the adamant shall draw her to you, though you keep distance off.

CAMILLO : A philosophical reason.

FLAMINEO : Walk by her o' the nobleman's fashion, and tell her you will lie with her at the end of the progress.

CAMILLO (*coming forward*) : Vittoria, I cannot be induced, or, as a man would say, incited——

VITTORIA : To do what, sir ?

CAMILLO : To lie with you to-night. Your silk-worm useth to fast every third day, and the next following spins the better. To-morrow at night I am for you.

VITTORIA : You'll spin a fair thread, trust to 't.

FLAMINEO (*aside to* CAMILLO) : But, do you hear, I shall have you steal to her chamber about midnight.

CAMILLO : Do you think so ? why, look you, brother, because you shall not think I'll gull you, take the key, lock me into the chamber, and say you shall be sure of me.

FLAMINEO : In troth, I will ; I'll be your jailer once. But have you ne'er a false door ?

CAMILLO : A pox on 't, as I am a Christian ! Tell me to-morrow how scurvily she takes my unkind parting.

FLAMINEO : I will.

CAMILLO : Didst thou not mark the jest of the silkworm ? Good-night : in faith, I will use this trick often.

FLAMINEO : Do, do, do. [*Exit* CAMILLO ; *and* FLAMINEO *locks the door on him*]. So now you are safe.—Ha, ha, ha ! thou entanglest thyself in thine own work like a silkworm. Come, sister ; darkness hides your blush. Women are like curst dogs : civility keeps them tied all daytime, but they are let loose at midnight ; then they do most good, or most mischief.—My lord, my lord !

Re-enter BRACHIANO. ZANCHE *brings out a carpet, spreads it, and lays on it two fair cushions.*

BRACHIANO : Give credit, I could wish time would stand still,
And never end this interview, this hour :
But all delight doth itself soon'st devour.

Enter CORNELIA *behind, listening.*

Let me into your bosom, happy lady,
Pour out, instead of eloquence, my vows :
Loose me not, madam ; for, if you forgo me,
I am lost eternally.

VITTORIA : Sir, in the way of pity.
I wish you heart-whole.

BRACHIANO : You are a sweet physician.

VITTORIA : Sure, sir, a loathèd cruelty in ladies
Is as to doctors many funerals ;
It takes away their credit.

BRACHIANO : Excellent creature !
We call the cruel fair : what name for you
That are so merciful ? [*Embraces her.*
ZANCHE : See, now they close.
FLAMINEO : Most happy union !

CORNELIA : My fears are fall'n upon me : O my heart !
My son the pander ! now I find our house
Sinking to ruin. Earthquakes leave behind,
Where they have tyrannized, iron, or lead, or stone ;
But, woe to ruin, violent lust leaves none !
BRACHIANO : What value is this jewel ?
VITTORIA : 'Tis the ornament
Of a weak fortune.
BRACHIANO : In sooth, I'll have it ; nay, I will but change
My jewel for your jewel.

FLAMINEO : Excellent !
His jewel for her jewel :—well put in, duke.
BRACHIANO : Nay, let me see you wear it.
VITTORIA : Here, sir ?
GRACHIANO : Nay, lower, you shall wear my jewel lower.
FLAMINEO : That's better ; she must wear his jewel lower.
VITTORIA : To pass away the time, I'll tell your grace
A dream I had last night.
BRACHIANO : Most wishedly.

VITTORIA : A foolish idle dream.
Methought I walked about the mid of night
Into a churchyard, where a goodly yew-tree
Spread her large root in ground. Under that yew,
As I sate sadly leaning on a grave
Chequered with cross sticks, there came stealing in
Your duchess and my husband : one of them
A pickaxe bore, the other a rusty spade ;
And in rough terms they gan to challenge me
About this yew.
BRACHIANO : That tree ?
VITTORIA : This harmless yew.
They told me my intent was to root up
That well-grown yew, and plant i' the stead of it
A withered blackthorn ; and for that they vowed
To bury me alive. My husband straight
With pickaxe gan to dig, and your fell duchess
With shovel, like a Fury, voided out
The earth, and scattered bones. Lord, how, methought,
I trembled ! and yet, for all this terror,
I could not pray.
FLAMINEO : No ; the devil was in your dream.

VITTORIA : When to my rescue there arose, methought,
A whirlwind, which let fall a massy arm
From that strong plant ;
And both were struck dead by that sacred yew,
In that base shallow grave that was their due.
FLAMINEO : Excellent devil ! she hath taught him in a dream
To make away his duchess and her husband.

BRACHIANO : Sweetly shall I interpret this your dream.
You are lodged within his arms who shall protect you
From all the fevers of a jealous husband ;
From the poor envy of our phlegmatic duchess.
I'll seat you above law, and above scandal ;
Give to your thoughts the invention of delight,
And the fruition ; nor shall government
Divide me from you longer than a care
To keep you great : you shall to me at once
Be dukedom, health, wife, children, friends, and all.
CORNELIA (*coming forward*) : Woe to light hearts, they still
forerun our fall !
FLAMINEO : What Fury raised thee up ?—Away, away !
[*Exit* ZANCHE.
CORNELIA : What make you here, my lord, this dead of night ?
Never dropped mildew on a flower here
Till now.
FLAMINEO : I pray, will you go to bed, then,
Lest you be blasted ?
CORNELIA : O, that this fair garden
Had with all poisoned herbs of Thessaly
At first been planted ; made a nursery
For witchcraft, rather than a burial plot
For both your honours !
VITTORIA : Dearest mother, hear me.
CORNELIA : O, thou dost make my brow bend to the earth,
Sooner than nature ! See, the curse of children !
In life they keep us frequently in tears ;
And in the cold grave leave us in pale fears.
BRACHIANO : Come, come, I will not hear you.
VITTORIA : Dear, my lord—
CORNELIA : Where is thy duchess now, adulterous duke ?
Thou little dreamd'st this night she is come to Rome.
FLAMINEO : How ! come to Rome !
VITTORIA : The duchess !
BRACHIANO : She had been better—
CORNELIA : The lives of princes should like dials move,
Whose regular example is so strong,
They make the times by them go right or wrong.
FLAMINEO : So ; have you done ?
CORNELIA : Unfortunate Camillo !
VITTORIA : I do protest, if any chaste denial,
In anything but blood could have allayed
His long suit to me—
CORNELIA : I will join with thee,
To the most woeful end e'er mother kneeled :
If thou dishonour thus thy husband's bed,
Be thy life short as are the funeral tears
In great men's.
BRACHIANO : Fie, fie, the woman's mad.
CORNELIA : Be thy act, Judas-like—betray in kissing :
Mayst thou be envied during his short breath,
And pitied like a wretch after his death !
VITTORIA : O me accurst ! [*Exit.*

FLAMINEO : Are you out of your wits, my lord ?
I'll fetch her back again ?
BRACHIANO : No, I'll to bed :
Send Doctor Julio to me presently.—
Uncharitable woman ! thy rash tongue
Hath raised a fearful and prodigious storm :
Be thou the cause of all ensuing harm. [*Exit.*

FLAMINEO : Now, you that stand so much upon your honour,
Is this a fitting time o' night, think you,
To send a duke home without e'er a man ?
I would fain know where lies the mass of wealth
Which you have hoarded for my maintenance,
That I may bear my beard out of the level
Of my lord's stirrup.
CORNELIA : What ! because we are poor
Shall we be vicious ?
FLAMINEO : Pray, what means have you
To keep me from the galleys or the gallows ?
My father proved himself a gentleman,
Sold all 's land, and, like a fortunate fellow,
Died ere the money was spent. You brought me up
At Padua, I confess, where, I protest,
For want of means (the university judge me)
I have been fain to heel my tutor's stockings,
At least seven years : conspiring with a beard,
Made me a graduate ; then to this duke's service.
I visited the court, whence I returned
More courteous, more lecherous by far,
But not a suit the richer ; and shall I,
Having a path so open and so free
To my preferment, still retain your milk
In my pale forehead ? no, this face of mine
I'll arm, and fortify with lusty wine,
'Gainst shame and blushing.
CORNELIA : O, that I ne'er had borne thee !
FLAMINEO : So would I ;
I would the common'st courtezan in Rome
Had been my mother, rather than thyself.
Nature is very pitiful to whores,
To give them but few children, yet those children
Plurality of fathers : they are sure
They shall not want. Go, go,
Complain unto my great lord cardinal ;
Yet may be he will justify the act.
Lycurgus wondered much men would provide
Good stallions for their mares, and yet would suffer
Their fair wives to be barren.
CORNELIA : Misery of miseries ! [*Exit.*

FLAMINEO : The duchess come to court ! I like not that.
We are engaged to mischief, and must on :
As rivers to find out the ocean
Flow with the crook bendings beneath forcèd banks :
Or as we see, to aspire some mountain's top,

The way ascends not straight, but imitates
The subtle foldings of a winter's snake ;
So who knows policy and her true aspèct,
Shall find her ways winding and indirect. [*Exit.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*A Room in* FRANCISCO'S *Palace.*

Enter FRANCISCO DE MEDICIS, CARDINAL MONTICELSO, MARCELLO, ISABELLA, *young* GIOVANNI, *with little* JAQUES *the Moor.*

FRANCISCO : Have you not seen your husband since you arrived ?
ISABELLA : Not yet, sir.
FRANCISCO : Surely he is wondrous kind.
If I had such a dove-house as Camillo's,
I would set fire on 't, were't but to destroy
The pole-cats that haunt to it.—My sweet cousin !
GIOVANNI : Lord uncle, you did promise me a horse
And armour.
FRANCISCO : That I did, my pretty cousin.—Marcello, see it fitted.
MARCELLO : My lord, the duke is here.
FRANCISCO : Sister, away ! you must not yet be seen.
ISABELLA : I do beseech you,
Entreat him mildly ; let not your rough tongue
Set us at louder variance : all my wrongs
Are freely pardoned ; and I do not doubt,
As men, to try the precious unicorn's horn,
Make of the powder a preservative circle,
And in it put a spider, so these arms
Shall charm his poison, force it to obeying,
And keep him chaste from an infected straying.
FRANCISCO : I wish it may. Be gone. Void the chamber.
[*Exeunt* ISABELLA, GIOVANNI, *and* JAQUES.

Enter BRACHIANO *and* FLAMINEO.

You are welcome : will you sit ?—I pray, my lord,
Be you my orator, my heart's too full ;
I'll second you anon.
MONTICELSO : Ere I begin,
Let me entreat your grace forgo all passion,
Which may be raisèd by my free discourse.
BRACHIANO : As silent as i' the church : you may proceed.
MONTICELSO : It is a wonder to your noble friends,
That you, [who] have, as 'twere, entered the world
With a free sceptre in your able hand,
And have to th' use of nature well applied
High gifts of learning, should in your prime age
Neglect your awful throne for the soft down
Of an insatiate bed. O, my lord,
The drunkard after all his lavish cups
Is dry, and then is sober ; so at length,
When you awake from this lascivious dream,
Repentance then will follow, like the sting
Placed in the adder's tail. Wretched are princes

When fortune blasteth but a petty flower
Of their unwieldy crowns, or ravisheth
But one pearl from their sceptres : but, alas,
When they to wilful shipwreck loose good fame,
All princely titles perish with their name !

BRACHIANO : You have said, my lord.

MONTICELSO : Enough to give you taste
How far I am from flattering your greatness.

BRACHIANO : Now you that are his second, what say you ?
Do not like young hawks fetch a course about :
Your game flies fair and for you.

FRANCISCO : Do not fear it :
I'll answer you in your own hawking phrase.
Some eagles that should gaze upon the sun
Seldom soar high, but take their lustful ease ;
Since they from dunghill birds their prey can seize.
You know Vittoria ?

BRACHIANO : Yes.

FRANCISCO : You shift your shirt there,
When you retire from tennis ?

BRACHIANO : Happily.

FRANCISCO : Her husband is lord of a poor fortune ;
Yet she wears cloth of tissue.

BRACHIANO : What of this ?—
Will you urge that, my good lord cardinal,
As part of her confession at next shrift,
And know from whence it sails ?

FRANCISCO : She is your strumpet.

BRACHIANO : Uncivil sir, there's hemlock in thy breath,
And that black slander. Were she a whore of mine,
All thy loud cannons, and thy borrowed Switzers,
Thy galleys, nor thy sworn confederates,
Durst not supplant her.

FRANCISCO : Let's not talk on thunder.
Thou hast a wife, our sister : would I had given
Both her white hands to death, bound and locked fast
In her last winding-sheet, when I gave thee
But one !

BRACHIANO : Thou hadst given a soul to God then.

FRANCISCO : True :
Thy ghostly father, with all 's absolution,
Shall ne'er do so by thee.

BRACHIANO : Spit thy poison !

FRANCISCO : I shall not need ; lust carries her sharp whip
At her own girdle. Look to 't, for our anger
Is making thunder-bolts.

BRACHIANO : Thunder ? in faith,
They are but crackers.

FRANCISCO : We'll end this with the cannon.

BRACHIANO : Thou'lt get naught by it but iron in thy wounds.
And gunpowder in thy nostrils.

FRANCISCO : Better that,
Than change perfumes for plasters.

BRACHIANO : Pity on thee !
'Twere good you'd show your slaves or men condemned
Your new-ploughed forehead-defiance ! and I'll meet thee,
Even in a thicket of thy ablest men.
MONTICELSO : My lords, you shall not word it any further
Without a milder limit.
FRANCISCO : Willingly.
BRACHIANO : Have you proclaimed a triumph, that you bait
A lion thus ?
MONTICELSO : My lord !
BRACHIANO : I am tame, I am tame, sir.
FRANCISCO : We send unto the duke for conference
'Bout levies 'gainst the pirates ; my lord duke
Is not at home : we come ourself in person ;
Still my lord duke is busied. But we fear,
When Tiber to each prowling passenger
Discovers flocks of wild ducks ; then, my lord,
'Bout moulting time I mean, we shall be certain
To find you sure enough, and speak with you.
BRACHIANO : Ha !
FRANCISCO : A mere tale of a tub, my words are idle ;
But to express the sonnet by natural reason,—
When stags grow melancholic, you'll find the season.
MONTICELSO : No more, my lord : here comes a champion
Shall end the difference between you both,—

Re-enter GIOVANNI.

Your son, the Prince Giovanni. See, my lords,
What hopes you store in him : this is a casket
For both your crowns, and should be held like dear.
Now is he apt for knowledge ; therefore know,
It is a more direct and even way
To train to virtue those of princely blood
By examples than by precepts : if by examples.
Whom should he rather strive to imitate
Than his own father ? be his pattern, then ;
Leave him a stock of virtue that may last,
Should fortune rend his sails and split his mast
BRACHIANO : Your hand, boy, growing to a soldier ?
GIOVANNI : Give me a pike.
FRANCISCO : What, practising your pike so young, fair coz ?
GIOVANNI : Suppose me one of Homer's frogs, my lord,
Tossing my bullrush thus. Pray, sir, tell me,
Might not a child of good discretion
Be leader to an army ?
FRANCISCO : Yes, cousin, a young prince
Of good discretion might.
GIOVANNI : So you say ?
Indeed, I have heard, 'tis fit a general
Should not endanger his own person oft ;
So that he make a noise when he 's o' horseback,
Like a Dansk drummer, O, 'tis excellent !
He need not fight :—methinks his horse as well
Might lead an army for him. If I live,

I'll charge the French foe in the very front
Of all my troops, the foremost man.

FRANCISCO : What, what !

GIOVANNI : And will not bid my soldiers up and follow,
But bid them follow me.

BRACHIANO : Forward lapwing !
He flies with the shell on 's head.

FRANCISCO : Pretty cousin !

GIOVANNI : The first year, uncle, that I go to war,
All prisoners that I take I will set free
Without their ransom.

FRANCISCO : Ha, without their ransom ?
How, then, will you reward your soldiers
That took those prisoners for you ?

GIOVANNI : Thus, my lord ;
I'll marry them to all the wealthy widows
That fall that year.

FRANCISCO : Why, then, the next year following,
You'll have no men to go with you to war.

GIOVANNI : Why, then, I'll press the women to the war,
And then the men will follow.

MONTICELSO : Witty prince !

FRANCISCO : See, a good habit makes a child a man,
Whereas a bad one makes a man a beast.
Come, you and I are friends.

BRACHIANO : Most wishedly ;
Like bones which, broke in sunder and well set,
Knit the more strongly.

FRANCISCO : Call Camillo hither. [*Exit* MARCELLO.
You have received the rumour, how Count Lodowick
Is turned a pirate ?

BRACHIANO : Yes.

FRANCISCO : We are now preparing
Some ships to fetch him in. [*Re-enter* ISABELLA.
Behold your duchess.
We now will leave you, and expect from you
Nothing but kind entreaty.

BRACHIANO : You have charmed me.
[*Exeunt* FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, *and* GIOVANNI. FLAMINEO *retires.*

You are in health, we see,—

ISABELLA : And above health,
To see my lord well.

BRACHIANO : So I wonder much.
What amorous whirlwind hurried you to Rome.

ISABELLA : Devotion, my lord.

BRACHIANO : Devotion ?
Is your soul charged with any grievous sin ?

ISABELLA : 'Tis burdened with too many ; and I think,
The oftener that we cast our reckonings up,
Our sleeps will be the sounder.

BRACHIANO : Take your chamber

ISABELLA : Nay, my dear lord, I will not have you angry :
Doth not my absence from you, now two months,
Merit one kiss ?
BRACHIANO : I do not use to kiss.
If that will dispossess your jealousy,
I'll swear it to you.
ISABELLA : O my loved lord,
I do not come to chide. My jealousy ?
I am to learn what that Italian means.
You are as welcome to these longing arms
As I to you a virgin.
BRACHIANO : O, your breath !
Out upon sweetmeats and continued physic,—
The plague is in them !
ISABELLA : You have oft, for these two lips,
Neglected cassia or the natural sweets
Of the spring-violet : they are not yet much withered.
My lord, I should be merry : these your frowns
Show in a helmet lovely ; but on me,
In such a peaceful interview, methinks
They are too-too roughly knit.
BRACHIANO : O, dissemblance !
Do you bandy factions 'gainst me ? have you learnt
The trick of impudent baseness, to complain
Unto your kindred ?
ISABELLA : Never, my dear lord.
BRACHIANO : Must I be hunted out ? or was't your trick
To meet some amorous gallant here in Rome,
That must supply our discontinuance ?
ISABELLA : I pray, sir, burst my heart ; and in my death
Turn to your ancient pity, though not love.
BRACHIANO : Because your brother is the corpulent duke,
That is, the great duke, 'sdeath, I shall not shortly
Racket away five hundred crowns at tennis,
But it shall rest upon record ! I scorn him
Like a shaved Polack ; all his reverend wit
Lies in his wardrobe ; he's a discreet fellow
When he is made up in his robes of state.
Your brother, the great duke, because h' as galleys,
And now and then ransacks a Turkish fly-boat,
(Now all the hellish Furies take his soul !)
First made this match : accursèd be the priest
That sang the wedding mass, and even my issue !
ISABELLA : O, too-too far you have cursed !
BRACHIANO : Your hand I'll kiss ;
This is the lastest ceremony of my love.
Henceforth I'll never lie with thee ; by this,
This wedding-ring, I'll ne'er more lie with thee :
And this divorce shall be as truly kept
As if the judge had doomed it. Fare you well :
Our sleeps are severed.
ISABELLA : Forbid it, the sweet union
Of all things blessèd ! why, the saints in Heaven
Will knit their brows at that.

BRACHIANO : Let not thy love
Make thee an unbeliever ; this my vow
Shall never, on my soul, be satisfied
With my repentance ; let thy brother rage
Beyond a horrid tempest or sea-fight,
My vow is fixed.

ISABELLA : O my winding-sheet !
Now shall I need thee shortly.—Dear my lord,
Let me hear once more what I would not hear :
Never ?

BRACHIANO : Never.

ISABELLA : O my unkind lord ! may your sins find mercy,
As I upon a woeful widowed bed
Shall pray for you, if not to turn your eyes
Upon your wretched wife and hopeful son,
Yet that in time you'll fix them upon Heaven !

BRACHIANO : No more : go, go complain to the great duke.

ISABELLA : No, my dear lord ; you shall have present witness
How I'll work peace between you. I will make
Myself the author of your cursèd vow ;
I have some cause to do it, you have none.
Conceal it, I beseech you, for the weal
Of both your dukedoms, that you wrought the means
Of such a separation : let the fault
Remain with my supposèd jealousy ;
And think with what a piteous and rent heart
I shall perform this sad ensuing part.

Re-enter FRANCISCO *and* MONTICELSO.

BRACHIANO : Well, take your course.—My honourable brother !

FRANCISCO : Sister !—This is not well, my lord.—Why, sister !—
She merits not this welcome.

BRACHIANO : Welcome, say ?
She hath given a sharp welcome.

FRANCISCO : Are you foolish ?
Come, dry your tears : is this a modest course
To better what is naught, to rail and weep ?
Grow to a reconcilement, or, by Heaven,
I'll ne'er more deal between you.

ISABELLA : Sir, you shall not ;
No, though Vittoria, upon that condition,
Would become honest.

FRANCISCO : Was your husband loud
Since we departed ?

ISABELLA : By my life, sir, no ;
I swear by that I do not care to lose.
Are all these ruins of my former beauty
Laid out for a whore's triumph ?

FRANCISCO : Do you hear ?
Look upon other women, with what patience
They suffer these slight wrongs ; with what justice
They study to requite them : take that course.

ISABELLA : O, that I were a man, or that I had power
To execute my apprehended wishes !
I would whip some with scorpions.
FRANCISCO : What ! turned Fury ?
ISABELLA : To dig the strumpet's eyes out ; let her lie
Some twenty months a dying ; to cut off
Her nose and lips, pull out her rotten teeth ;
Preserve her flesh like mummia, for trophies
Of my just anger ! Hell to my affliction
Is mere snow-water. By your favour, sir ;—
Brother, draw near, and my lord cardinal ;—
Sir, let me borrow of you but one kiss :
Henceforth I'll never lie with you, by this,
This wedding-ring.
FRANCISCO : How ? ne'er more lie with him ?
ISABELLA : And this divorce shall be as truly kept
As if in throngèd court a thousand ears
Had heard it, and a thousand lawyers' hands
Sealed to the separation.
BRACHIANO : Ne'er lie with me ?
ISABELLA : Let not my former dotage
Make thee an unbeliever : This my vow
Shall never, on my soul, be satisfied
With my repentance ; manet alta mente repostum.
FRANCISCO : Now, by my birth, you are a foolish, mad,
And jealous woman.
BRACHIANO : You see 'tis not my seeking.
FRANCISCO : Was this your circle of pure unicorn's horn
You said should charm your lord ? now, horns upon thee,
For jealousy deserves them ! Keep your vow
And take your chamber.
ISABELLA : No, sir ; I'll presently to Padua ;
I will not stay a minute.
MONTICELSO : O good madam !
BRACHIANO : 'Twere best to let her have her humour :
Some half-day's journey will bring down her stomach,
And then she'll turn in post.
FRANCISCO : To see her come
To my lord cardinal for a dispensation
Of her rash vow, will beget excellent laughter.
ISABELLA (*aside*) : Unkindness, do thy office ; poor heart, break :
Those are the killing griefs which dare not speak. [*Exit.*

Re-enter MARCELLO *with* CAMILLO.

MARCELLO : Camillo's come, my lord.
FRANCISCO : Where's the commission ?
MARCELLO : 'Tis here.
FRANCISCO : Give me the signet.
[*Exeunt* FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, CAMILLO, *and* MARCELLO.
FLAMINEO : My lord, do you mark their whispering ? I will compound a medicine, out of their two heads, stronger than garlic, deadlier than stibium : the cantharides, which are scarce seen to stick upon the flesh when they work to the heart, shall not do it with more silence or invisible cunning.

BRACHIANO : About the murder ?
FLAMINEO : They are sending him to Naples, but I'll send him to Candy.

Enter DOCTOR JULIO.

Here's another property too.
BRACHIANO : Oh, the doctor !
FLAMINEO : A poor quack-salving knave, my lord ; one that should have been lashed for 's lechery, but that he confessed a judgement, had an execution laid upon him, and so put the whip to a non plus.
DOCTOR : And was cozened, my lord, by an arranter knave than myself, and made pay all the colourable execution.
FLAMINEO : He will shoot pills into a man's guts shall make them have more ventages than a cornet or a lamprey ; he will poison a kiss ; and was once minded, for his master-piece, because Ireland breeds no poison, to have prepared a deadly vapour in a Spaniard's f—t, that should have poisoned all Dublin.
BRACHIANO : O, Saint Anthony's fire !
DOCTOR : Your secretary is merry, my lord.
FLAMINEO : O thou cursed antipathy to nature !—Look, his eye's bloodshed, like a needle a chirurgeon stitcheth a wound with. —Let me embrace thee, toad, and love thee, O thou abominable loathsome gargarism, that will fetch up lungs, lights, heart, and liver, by scruples !
BRACHIANO : No more.—I must employ thee, honest doctor :
You must to Padua, and by the way,
Use some of your skill for us.
DOCTOR : Sir, I shall.
BRACHIANO : But, for Camillo ?
FLAMINEO : He dies this night, by such a politic strain,
Men shall suppose him by 's own engine slain.
But for your duchess' death—
DOCTOR : I'll make her sure.
BRACHIANO : Small mischiefs are by greater made secure.
FLAMINEO : Remember this, you slave ; when knaves come to preferment, they rise as gallowses are raised i' the Low Countries, one upon another's shoulders. [*Exeunt* OMNES.

SCENE II.—*The same.*

Enter FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, CAMILLO, *and* MARCELLO.

MONTICELSO : Here is an emblem, nephew, pray peruse it :
'Twas thrown in at your window.
CAMILLO : At my window ?
Here is a stag, my lord, hath shed his horns,
And for the loss of them the poor beast weeps :
The word, Inopem me copia fecit.
MONTICELSO : That is,
Plenty of horns hath made him poor of horns.
CAMILLO : What should this mean ?
MONTICELSO : I'll tell you : 'tis given out
You are a cuckold.

CAMILLO : Is it given out so ?
I had rather such report as that, my lord.
Should keep within doors.

FRANCISCO : Have you any children ?
CAMILLO : None, my lord.

FRANCISCO : You are the happier.
I'll tell you a tale.
CAMILLO : Pray, my lord.

FRANCISCO : An old tale.
Upon a time Phœbus, the god of light,
Or him we call the Sun, would needs be married :
The gods gave their consent, and Mercury
Was sent to voice it to the general world.
But what a piteous cry there straight arose
Amongst smiths and felt-makers, brewers and cooks,
Reapers and butterwomen, amongst fishmongers,
And thousand other trades, which are annoyed
By his excessive heat ! 'twas lamentable.
They came to Jupiter all in a sweat,
And do forbid the banns. A great fat cook
Was made their speaker, who entreats of Jove
That Phœbus might be gelded ; for, if now,
When there was but one sun, so many men
Were like to perish by his violent heat,
What should they do if he were married,
And should beget more, and those children
Make fireworks like their father ? So say I ;
Only I will apply it to your wife :
Her issue, should not Providence prevent it,
Would make both nature, time, and man repent it.

MONTICELSO : Look you, cousin,
Go, change the air, for shame ; see if your absence
Will blast your cornucopia. Marcello
Is chosen with you joint commissioner
For the relieving our Italian coast
From pirates.
MARCELLO : I am much honoured in 't.

CAMILLO : But, sir,
Ere I return, the stag's horns may be sprouted
Greater than those are shed.

MONTICELSO : Do not fear it :
I'll be your ranger.
CAMILLO : You must watch i' the nights ;
Then's the most danger.
FRANCISCO : Farewell, good Marcello :
All the best fortunes of a soldier's wish
Bring you a-ship-board !

CAMILLO : Were I not best, now I am turn'd soldier,
Ere that I leave my wife, sell all she hath,
And then take leave of her ?

MONTICELSO : I expect good from you,
Your parting is so merry.

CAMILLO : Merry, my lord ! o' the captain's humour right ;
I am resolved to be drunk this night.
[*Exeunt* CAMILLO *and* MARCELLO.
FRANCISCO : So, 'twas well fitted : now shall we discern
How his wished absence will give violent way
To Duke Brachiano's lust.
MONTICELSO : Why, that was it ;
To what scorned purpose else should we make choice
Of him for a sea-captain ? and, besides,
Count Lodowick, which was rumoured for a pirate,
Is now in Padua.
FRANCISCO : Is 't true ?
MONTICELSO : Most certain.
I have letters from him, which are suppliant
To work his quick repeal from banishment :
He means to address himself for pension
Unto our sister duchess.
FRANCISCO : Oh, 'twas well :
We shall not want his absence past six days.
I fain would have the Duke Brachiano run
Into notorious scandal ; for there's naught
In such cursed dotage to repair his name,
Only the deep sense of some deathless shame.
MONTICELSO : It may be objected, I am dishonourable
To play thus with my kinsman ; but I answer,
For my revenge I'd stake a brother's life,
That, being wronged, durst not avenge himself.
FRANCISCO : Come, to observe this strumpet.
MONTICELSO : Curse of greatness !
Sure he'll not leave her ?
FRANCISCO : There's small pity in 't :
Like mistletoe on sear elms spent by weather,
Let him cleave to her, and both rot together. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in the House of* CAMILLO.

Enter BRACHIANO, *with one in the habit of a Conjurer.*

BRACHIANO : Now, sir, I claim your promise : 'tis dead midnight,
The time prefixed to show me, by your art,
How the intended murder of Camillo
And our loathed duchess grow to action.
CONJURER : You have won me by your bounty to a deed
I do not often practise. Some there are
Which by sophistic tricks aspire, that name,
Which I would gladly lose, of nigromancer ;
As some that use to juggle upon cards,
Seeming to conjure, when indeed they cheat ;
Others that raise up their confederate spirits
'Bout windmills, and endanger their own necks
For making of a squib ; and some there are
Will keep a curtal to show juggling tricks,
And give out 'tis a spirit ; besides these,
Such a whole realm of almanac-makers, figure-flingers,
—Fellows, indeed, that only live by stealth,

Since they do merely lie about stol'n goods,—
They'd make men think the devil were fast and loose,
With speaking fustian Latin. Pray, sit down :
Put on this night-cap sir, 'tis charmed ; and now
I'll show you, by my strong commanding art,
The circumstance that breaks your duchess' heart.

A Dumb Show.

Enter suspiciously Julio *and* Christophero : They draw a curtain where Brachiano's picture is, they put on spectacles of glass, which cover their eyes and noses, and then burn perfumes afore the picture, and wash the lips of the picture ; that done, quenching the fire, and putting off their spectacles, they depart laughing.

Enter Isabella in her nightgown, as to bed-ward, with lights after her, Count Ludovico, Giovanni, Guidantonio, and others waiting on her : she kneels down as to prayers, then draws the curtain of the picture, does three reverences to it, and kisses it thrice ; she faints, and will not suffer them to come near it ; dies : sorrow expressed in Giovanni and Count Lodovico ; she is conveyed out solemnly.

Brachiano : Excellent ! then she's dead ?
Conjurer : She's poisoned
By the fumed picture. 'Twas her custom nightly,
Before she went to bed, to go and visit
Your picture, and to feed her eyes and lips
On the dead shadow. Doctor Julio,
Observing this, infects it with an oil
And other poisoned stuff, which presently
Did suffocate her spirits.
Brachiano : Methought I saw
Count Lodowick there.
Conjurer : He was : and by my art
I find he did most passionately dote
Upon your duchess. Now turn another way,
And view Camillo's far more politic fate.
Strike louder, music, from this charmèd ground,
To yield, as fits the act, a tragic sound !

The Second Dumb Show.

Enter Flamineo, Marcello, Camillo, with four more, as Captains ; they drink healths, and dance : a vaulting-horse is brought into the room : Marcello and two more whispered out of the room, while Flamineo and Camillo strip themselves into their shirts, as to vault ; they compliment who shall begin : as Camillo is about to vault, Flamineo pitcheth him upon his neck, and with the help of the rest, writhes his neck about ; seems to see if it be broke, and lays him folded double, as 't were, under the horse ; makes shows to call for help : Marcello comes in, laments ; sends for the Cardinal and Duke, who come forth with armed men ; wonder at the act ; command the body to be carried home ; apprehend Flamineo,

Marcello, and the rest, and go, as 't were, to apprehend Vittoria.

BRACHIANO : 'Twas quaintly done ; but yet each circumstance I taste not fully.

CONJURER : O, 'twas most apparent :
You saw them enter, charged with their deep healths
To their boon voyage ; and, to second that,
Flamineo calls to have a vaulting-horse
Maintain their sport ; the virtuous Marcello
Is innocently plotted forth the room ;
Whilst your eyes saw the rest, and can inform you
The engine of all.

BRACHIANO : It seems Marcello and Flamineo
Are both committed.

CONJURER : Yes, you saw them guarded ;
And now they are come with purpose to apprehend
Your mistress, fair Vittoria. We are now
Beneath her roof : 'twere fit we instantly
Make out by some back-postern.

BRACHIANO : Noble friend,
You bind me ever to you : this shall stand
As the firm seal annexèd to my hand ;
It shall enforce a payment.

CONJURER : Sir, I thank you.

[*Exit* BRACHIANO.

Both flowers and weeds spring when the sun is warm,
And great men do great good or else great harm. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*Courtyard of the Mansion of* MONTICELSO.

Enter FRANCISCO *and* MONTICELSO, *their* CHANCELLOR *and* REGISTER.

FRANCISCO : You have dealt discreetly, to obtain the presence
Of all the grave leiger ambassadors,
To hear Vittoria's trial.

MONTICELSO : 'Twas not ill ;
For, sir, you know we have naught but circumstances
To charge her with, about her husband's death :
Their approbation, therefore, to the proofs
Of her black lust shall make her infamous
To all our neighbouring kingdoms. I wonder
If Brachiano will be here.

FRANCISCO : O fie.
'Twere impudence too palpable. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FLAMINEO *and* MARCELLO *guarded, and a* LAWYER.

LAWYER : What, are you in by the week ? so,
I will try now whether thy wit be close prisoner.
Methinks none should sit upon thy sister but old whore-masters.

FLAMINEO : Or cuckolds ; for your cuckold is your most terrible tickler of lechery. Whore-masters would serve ; for none are judges at tilting but those that have been old tilters.

LAWYER : My lord duke and she have been very private.

FLAMINEO : You are a dull ass ; 'tis threatened they have been very public.

LAWYER : If it can be proved they have but kissed one another——

FLAMINEO : What then ?
LAWYER : My lord cardinal will ferret them.
FLAMINEO : A cardinal, I hope, will not catch conies.
LAWYER : For to sow kisses (mark what I say), to sow kisses is to reap lechery ; and, I am sure, a woman that will endure kissing is half won.
FLAMINEO : True, her upper part, by that rule : if you will win her nether part too, you know what follows.
LAWYER : Hark ; the ambassadors are lighted.
FLAMINEO (*aside*) : I do put on this feignèd garb of mirth
To gull suspicion.
MARCELLO : O my unfortunate sister !
I would my dagger-point had cleft her heart
When she first saw Brachiano : you, 'tis said,
Were made his engine and his stalking-horse,
To undo my sister.
FLAMINEO : I made a kind of path
To her and mine own preferment.
MARCELLO : Your ruin.
FLAMINEO : Hum ! thou art a soldier,
Follow'st the great duke, feed'st his victories,
As witches do their serviceable spirits,
Even with thy prodigal blood : what hast got,
But, like the wealth of captains, a poor handful,
Which in thy palm thou bear'st as men hold water ?
Seeking to gripe it fast, the frail reward
Steals through thy fingers.
MARCELLO : Sir !
FLAMINEO : Thou hast scarce maintenance
To keep thee in fresh shamois.
MARCELLO : Brother !
FLAMINEO : Hear me :—
And thus, when we have even poured ourselves
Into great fights, for their ambition
Or idle spleen, how shall we find reward ?
But as we seldom find the mistletoe
Sacred to physic, or the builder oak,
Without a mandrake by it ; so in our quest of gain,
Alas, the poorest of their forced dislikes
At a limb proffers, but at heart it strikes !
This is lamented doctrine.
MARCELLO : Come, come.
FLAMINEO : When age shall turn thee
White as a blooming hawthorn—
MARCELLO : I'll interrupt you :—
For love of virtue bear an honest heart,
And stride o'er every politic respect,
Which, where they most advance, they most infect.
Were I your father, as I am your brother,
I should not be ambitious to leave you
A better patrimony.
FLAMINEO : I'll think on 't.—
The lord ambassadors.

[*The* AMBASSADORS *pass over the stage severally.*

LAWYER : O my sprightly Frenchman !—Do you know him ? he's an admirable tilter.

FLAMINEO : I saw him at last tilting : he showed like a pewter candlestick, fashioned like a man in armour, holding a tilting-staff in his hand, little bigger than a candle of twelve i' the pound.

LAWYER : O, but he's an excellent horseman.

FLAMINEO : A lame one in his lofty tricks : he sleeps a-horseback, like a poulter.

LAWYER : Lo you, my Spaniard !

FLAMINEO : He carries his face in 's ruff, as I have seen a serving man carry glasses in a cypress hatband, monstrous steady, for fear of breaking : he looks like the claw of a blackbird, first salted then broiled in a candle. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—*A Hall in* MONTICELSO'S *Mansion.*

Enter FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, *the six leiger* AMBASSADORS, BRACHIANO, VITTORIA, FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, LAWYER, *a* GUARD, *and* SPECTATORS.

MONTICELSO : Forbear, my lord, here is no place assigned you :
This business by his holiness is left
To our examination.

BRACHIANO : May it thrive with you !
[*Lays a rich gown under him.*

FRANCISCO : A chair there for his lordship !

BRACHIANO : Forbear your kindness : an unbidden guest
Should travel as Dutchwomen go to church,
Bear their stools with them.

MONTICELSO : At your pleasure, sir.—
Stand to the table, gentlewoman.—Now, signior,
Fall to your plea.

LAWYER : Domine judex, converte oculos in hanc pestem, mulierum corruptissimam.

VITTORIA : What's he ?

FRANCISCO : A lawyer that pleads against you.

VITTORIA : Pray, my lord, let him speak his usual tongue ;
I'll make no answer else.

FRANCISCO : Why ? you understand Latin.

VITTORIA : I do, sir ; but amongst this auditory
Which come to hear my cause, the half or more
May be ignorant in 't.

MONTICELSO : Go on, sir.

VITTORIA : By your favour,
I will not have my accusation clouded
In a strange tongue ; all this assembly
Shall hear what you can charge me with.

FRANCISCO : Signior,
You need not stand on 't much ; pray, change your language.

MONTICELSO : O, for God's sake !—Gentlewoman, your credit
Shall be more famous by it.

LAWYER : Well, then, have at you !

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VITTORIA : I am at the mark, sir : I'll give aim to you,
And tell you how near you shoot.
LAWYER : Most literated judges, please your lordships
So to connive your judgements to the view
Of this debauched and diversivolent woman ;
Who such a black concatenation
Of mischief hath effected, that to extirp
The memory of 't, must be the consummation
Of her and her projections,—
VITTORIA : What's all this ?
LAWYER : Hold your peace :
Exorbitant sins must have exulceration.
VITTORIA : Surely, my lords, this lawyer here hath swallowed
Some pothecaries' bills, or proclamations ;
And now the hard and undigestible words
Come up, like stones we use give hawks for physic :
Why, this is Welsh to Latin.
LAWYER : My lords, the woman
Knows not her tropes nor figures, nor is perfect
In the academic derivation
Of grammatical elocution.
FRANCISCO : Sir, your pains
Shall be well spared, and your deep eloquence
Be worthily applauded amongst those
Which understand you.
LAWYER : My good lord,—
FRANCISCO : Sir,
Put up your papers in your fustian bag,——
[FRANCISCO *speaks this as in scorn.*
Cry mercy, sir, 'tis buckram—and accept
My notion of your learn'd verbosity.
LAWYER : I most graduatically thank your lordship :
I shall have use for them elsewhere. [*Exit.*
MONTICELSO : I shall be plainer with you, and paint out
Your follies in more natural red and white
Than that upon your cheek.
VITTORIA : O you mistake :
You raise a blood as noble in this cheek
As ever was your mother's.
MONTICELSO : I must spare you, till proof cry ' whore ' to that.—
Observe this creature here, my honoured lords,
A woman of a most prodigious spirit,
In her effected.
VITTORIA : Honourable my lord,
It doth not suit a reverend cardinal
To play the lawyer thus.
MONTICELSO : O, your trade
Instructs your language.—
You see, my lords, what goodly fruit she seems ;
Yet, like those apples travellers report
To grow where Sodom and Gomorrah stood,
I will but touch her, and you straight shall see
She'll fall to soot and ashes.

VITTORIA : Your envenomed
Pothecary should do 't.
MONTICELSO : I am resolved.
Were there a second Paradise to lose,
This devil would betray it.
VITTORIA : O poor charity !
Thou art seldom found in scarlet.
MONTICELSO : Who knows not how, when several night by night
Her gates were choked with coaches, and her rooms
Outbraved the stars with several kind of lights,
When she did counterfeit a prince's court
In music, banquets, and most riotous surfeits,
This whore, forsooth, was holy ?
VITTORIA : Ha ? whore ? what's that ?
MONTICELSO : Shall I expound whore to you ? sure, I shall ;
I'll give their perfect character. They are first,
Sweetmeats which rot the eater ; in man's nostril
Poisoned perfumes ; they are cozening alchymy ;
Shipwrecks in calmest weather. What are whores ?
Cold Russian winters, that appear so barren
As if that nature had forgot the spring :
They are the true material fire of hell :
Worse than those tributes i' the Low Countries paid,
Exactions upon meat, drink, garments, sleep,
Ay, even on man's perdition, his sin :
They are those brittle evidences of law
Which forfeit all a wretched man's estate
For leaving out one syllable. What are whores ?
They are those flattering bells have all one tune,
At weddings and at funerals. Your rich whores
Are only treasuries by extortion filled,
And emptied by curs'd riot. They are worse,
Worse than dead bodies which are begged at gallows,
And wrought upon by surgeons, to teach man
Wherein he is imperfect. What's a whore ?
She's like the guilty counterfeited coin
Which, whosoe'er first stamps it, brings in trouble
All that receive it.
VITTORIA : This character scapes me.
MONTICELSO : You, gentlewoman !
Take from all beasts and from all minerals
Their deadly poison—
VITTORIA : Well, what then ?
MONTICELSO : I'll tell thee ;
I'll find in thee a pothecary's shop,
To sample them all.
FRENCH AMBASSADOR : She hath lived ill.
ENGLISH AMBASSADOR : True ; but the cardinal's too bitter.
MONTICELSO : You know what whore is. Next the devil adultery,
Enters the devil murder.
FRANCISCO : Your unhappy
Husband is dead.
VITTORIA : O, he's a happy husband :
Now he owes nature nothing.

FRANCISCO : And by a vaulting-engine.
MONTICELSO : An active plot ;
He jumped into his grave.
FRANCISCO : What a prodigy was 't
That from some two yards' height a slender man
Should break his neck !
MONTICELSO : I' the rushes !
FRANCISCO : And what's more,
Upon the instant lose all use of speech,
All vital motion, like a man had lain
Wound up three days. Now mark each circumstance.
MONTICELSO : And look upon this creature was his wife.
She comes not like a widow ; she comes armed
With scorn and impudence : is this a mourning-habit ?
VITTORIA : Had I foreknown his death, as you suggest,
I would have bespoke my mourning.
MONTICELSO : O, you are cunning.
VITTORIA : You shame your wit and judgement,
To call it so. What ! is my just defence
By him that is my judge called impudence ?
Let me appeal, then, from this Christian court
To the uncivil Tartar.
MONTICELSO : See, my lords,
She scandals our proceedings.
VITTORIA : Humbly thus,
Thus low, to the most worthy and respected
Lieger ambassadors, my modesty
And womanhood I tender ; but withal,
So entangled in a cursèd accusation,
That my defence, of force, like Portia's,
Must personate masculine virtue. To the point.
Find me but guilty, sever head from body,
We'll part good friends : I scorn to hold my life
At yours or any man's entreaty, sir.
ENGLISH AMBASSADOR : She hath a brave spirit.
MONTICELSO : Well, well, such counterfeit jewels
Make true ones oft suspected.
VITTORIA : You are deceived :
For know, that all your strict-combinèd heads,
Which strike against this mine of diamonds,
Shall prove but glassen hammers,—they shall break.
These are but feignèd shadows of my evils :
Terrify babes, my lord, with painted devils ;
I am past such needless palsy. For your names
Of whore and murderess, they proceed from you,
As if a man should spit against the wind ;
The filth returns in 's face.
MONTICELSO : Pray you, mistress, satisfy me one question :
Who lodged beneath your roof that fatal night
Your husband brake his neck ?
BRACHIANO (*rising from his seat*) : That question
Enforceth me break silence : I was there.
MONTICELSO : Your business ?

BRACHIANO : Why, I came to comfort her,
And take some course for settling her estate,
Because I heard her husband was in debt
To you, my lord.
MONTICELSO : He was.
BRACHIANO : And 'twas strangely feared
That you would cozen her.
MONTICELSO : Who made you overseer ?
BRACHIANO : Why, my charity, my charity, which should flow
From every generous and noble spirit
To orphans and to widows.
MONTICELSO : Your lust.
BRACHIANO : Cowardly dogs bark loudest : sirrah priest,
I'll talk with you hereafter. Do you hear ?
The sword you frame of such an excellent temper
I'll sheathe in your own bowels.
There are a number of thy coat resemble
Your common post-boys.
MONTICELSO : Ha !
BRACHIANO : Your mercenary post-boys :
Your letters carry truth, but 'tis your guise
To fill your mouths with gross and impudent lies.
[*Moves towards the door.*
SERVANT : My lord, your gown.
BRACHIANO : Thou liest, 'twas my stool
Bestow 't upon thy master, that will challenge
The rest o' the household-stuff ; for Brachiano
Was ne'er so beggarly to take a stool
Out of another's lodging : let him make
Vallance for his bed on 't, or a demi-foot-cloth
For his most reverent moil. Monticelso,
Nemo me impune lacessit. [*Exit.*
MONTICELSO : Your champion's gone.
VITTORIA : The wolf may prey the better.
FRANCISCO : My lord, there's great suspicion of the murder,
But no sound proof who did it. For my part,
I do not think she hath a soul so black
To act a deed so bloody : if she have,
As in cold countries husbandmen plant vines,
And with warm blood manure them, even so
One summer she will bear unsavoury fruit,
And ere next spring wither both branch and root.
The act of blood let pass ; only descend
To matter of incontinence.
VITTORIA : I discern poison under your gilded pills.
MONTICELSO : Now the duke's gone, I will produce a letter,
Wherein 'twas plotted he and you should meet
At an apothecary's summer-house,
Down by the river Tiber,—view 't, my lords,—
Where, after wanton bathing and the heat
Of a lascivious banquet,—I pray read it,
I shame to speak the rest.

VITTORIA : Grant I was tempted ;
Temptation to lust proves not the act :
Casta est quam nemo rogavit.
You read his hot love to me, but you want
My frosty answer.
MONTICELSO : Frost i' the dog-days ? strange !
VITTORIA : Condemn you me for that the duke did love me ?
So may you blame some fair and crystal river
For that some melancholic distracted man
Hath drown'd himself in 't.
MONTICELSO : Truly drown'd, indeed.
VITTORIA : Sum up my faults, I pray, and you shall find,
That beauty and gay clothes, a merry heart,
And a good stomach to [a] feast, are all,
All the poor crimes that you can charge me with.
In faith, my lord, you might go pistol flies ;
The sport would be more noble.
MONTICELSO : Very good.
VITTORIA : But take your course : it seems you have beggared me first,
And now would fain undo me. I have houses,
Jewels, and a poor remnant of crusadoes :
Would those would make you charitable !
MONTICELSO : If the devil
Did ever take good shape, behold his picture.
VITTORIA : You have one virtue left,—You will not flatter me.
FRANCISCO : Who brought this letter ?
VITTORIA : I am not compelled to tell you.
MONTICELSO : My lord duke sent to you a thousand ducats
The twelfth of August.
VITTORIA : 'Twas to keep your cousin
From prison : I paid use for 't.
MONTICELSO : I rather think
'Twas interest for his lust.
VITTORIA : Who says so
But yourself ? if you be my accuser,
Pray, cease to be my judge : come from the bench ;
Give in your evidence 'gainst me, and let these
Be moderators. My lord cardinal,
Were your intelligencing ears as loving
As to my thoughts, had you an honest tongue,
I would not care though you proclaimed them all.
MONTICELSO : Go to, go to.
After your goodly and vainglorious banquet,
I'll give you a choke-pear.
VITTORIA : O' your own grafting ?
MONTICELSO : You were born in Venice, honourably descended
From the Vittelli : 'twas my cousin's fate,—
Ill may I name the hour,—to marry you :
He bought you of your father.
VITTORIA : Ha !
MONTICELSO : He spent there in six months
Twelve thousand ducats, and (to my acquaintance)
Received in dowry with you not one julio :

'Twas a hard pennyworth, the ware being so light.
I yet but draw the curtain ; now to your picture :
You came from thence a most notorious strumpet,
And so you have continued.
VITTORIA : My lord,—
MONTICELSO : Nay, hear me ;
You shall have time to prate. My Lord Brachiano—
Alas, I make but repetition
Of what is ordinary and Rialto talk,
And ballated, and would be played o' the stage,
But that vice many times finds such loud friends
That preachers are charmed silent.—
You gentlemen, Flamineo and Marcello,
The court hath nothing now to charge you with,
Only you must remain upon your sureties
For your appearance.
FRANCISCO : I stand for Marcello.
FLAMINEO : And my lord duke for me.
MONTICELSO : For you, Vittoria, your public fault,
Joined to the condition of the present time,
Takes from you all the fruits of noble pity.
Such a corrupted trial have you made
Both of your life and beauty, and been styled
No less an ominous fate than blazing stars
To princes : here's your sentence ; you are confined
Unto a house of convertites, and your bawd—
FLAMINEO (*aside*) : Who, I ?
MONTICELSO : The Moor.
FLAMINEO (*aside*) : O, I am a sound man again,
VITTORIA : A house of convertites ! what's that ?
MONTICELSO : A house
Of penitent whores.
VITTORIA : Do the noblemen in Rome
Erect it for their wives, that I am sent
To lodge there ?
FRANCISCO : You must have patience.
VITTORIA : I must first have vengeance.
I fain would know if you have your salvation
By patent, that you proceed thus.
MONTICELSO : Away with her !
Take her hence.
VITTORIA : A rape ! a rape !
MONTICELSO : How ?
VITTORIA : Yes, you have ravished justice ;
Forced her to do your pleasure.
MONTICELSO : Fie, she's mad !
VITTORIA : Die with those pills in your most cursèd maw
Should bring you health ! or while you sit o' the bench
Let your own spittle choke you !—
MONTICELSO : She's turned Fury.
VITTORIA : That the last day of judgment may so find you,
And leave you the same devil you were before !
Instruct me, some good horse-leech, to speak treason ;
For since you cannot take my life for deeds,

Take it for words ! O woman's poor revenge,
Which dwells but in the tongue ! I will not weep ;
No, I do scorn to call up one poor tear
To fawn on your injustice ; bear me hence
Unto this house of—what's your mitigating title ?

MONTICELSO : Of convertites.

VITTORIA : It shall not be a house of convertites ;
My mind shall make it honester to me
Than the Pope's palace, and more peaceable
Than thy soul, though thou art a cardinal.
Know this, and let it somewhat raise your spite,
Through darkness diamonds spread their richest light.
[*Exit* VITTORIA *with Guards, followed by Spectators.*

Re-enter BRACHIANO.

BRACHIANO : Now you and I are friends, sir, we'll shake hands
In a friend's grave together ; a fit place,
Being the emblem of soft peace, to atone our hatred.

FRANCISCO : Sir, what's the matter ?

BRACHIANO : I will not chase more blood from that loved cheek ;
You have lost too much already : fare you well. [*Exit.*

FRANCISCO : How strange these words sound ! what's the interpretation ?

FLAMINEO (*aside*) : Good ; this is a preface to the discovery of the duchess' death : he carries it well. Because now I cannot counterfeit a whining passion for the death of my lady, I will feign a mad humour for the disgrace of my sister ; and that will keep off idle questions. Treason's tongue hath a villainous palsy in 't. I will talk to any man, hear no man, and for a time appear a politic madman. [*Exit.*

Enter GIOVANNI *and* COUNT LODOVICO.

FRANCISCO : How now, my noble cousin ? what, in black ?

GIOVANNI : Yes, uncle, I was taught to imitate you
In virtue, and you [now] must imitate me
In colours of your garments. My sweet mother
Is——

FRANCISCO : How ! where ?

GIOVANNI : Is there ; no, yonder : indeed, sir, I'll not tell you,
For I shall make you weep.

FRANCISCO : Is dead ?

GIOVANNI : Do not blame me now ;
I did not tell you so.

LODOVICO : She's dead, my lord.

FRANCISCO : Dead ?

MONTICELSO : Blessed lady, thou art now above thy woes !—
Will 't please your lordships to withdraw a little ?
[*Exeunt* AMBASSADORS.

GIOVANNI : What do the dead do, uncle ? do they eat,
Hear music, go a-hunting, and be merry,
As we that live ?

FRANCISCO : No, coz ; they sleep.

GIOVANNI : Lord, Lord, that I were dead !
I have not slept these six nights.—When do they wake ?

FRANCISCO : When God shall please.
GIOVANNI : Good God, let her sleep ever !
For I have known her wake an hundred nights,
When all the pillow where she laid her head
Was brine-wet with her tears. I am to complain to you sir ;
I'll tell you how they have used her now she's dead :
They wrapped her in a cruel fold of lead,
And would not let me kiss her.
FRANCISCO : Thou didst love her.
GIOVANNI : I have often heard her say she gave me suck,
And it should seem by that she dearly loved me,
Since princes seldom do it.
FRANCISCO : O, all of my poor sister that remains !—
Take him away, for God's sake !

[*Exeunt* GIOVANNI, LODOVICO, *and* MARCELLO.

MONTICELSO : How now, my lord ?
FRANCISCO : Believe me, I am nothing but her grave ;
And I shall keep her blessèd memory
Longer than thousand epitaphs.

[*Exeunt* FRANCISCO *and* MONTICELSO.

SCENE II.—*The Courtyard of* MONTICELSO'S *Mansion.*

Enter FLAMINEO *as distracted.*

FLAMINEO : We endure the strokes like anvils or hard steel,
Till pain itself make us no pain to feel.
Who shall do me right now ? Is this the end of service ? I'd rather go weed garlic ; travel through France, and be mine own ostler ; wear sheepskin linings, or shoes that stink of blacking ; be entered into the list of the forty thousand pedlars in Poland.

Enter AMBASSADORS *of Savoy, France, and England, followed by* LODOVICO *and* MARCELLO.

Would I had rotted in some surgeon's house at Venice, built upon the pox as well as on piles, ere I had served Brachiano !
SAVOY AMBASSADOR : You must have comfort.
FLAMINEO : Your comfortable words are like honey ; they relish well in your mouth that's whole, but in mine that's wounded they go down as if the sting of the bee were in them. Oh, they have wrought their purpose cunningly, as if they would not seem to do it of malice ! In this a politician imitates the devil, as the devil imitates a cannon ; wheresoever he comes to do mischief, he comes with his backside towards you.
FRENCH AMBASSADOR : The proofs are evident.
FLAMINEO : Proof ! 'twas corruption. O gold, what a god art thou ! and O man, what a devil art thou to be tempted by that cursed mineral ! Your diversivolent lawyer, mark him : knaves turn informers, as maggots turn to flies ; you may catch gudgeons with either. A cardinal ! I would he would hear me : there's nothing so holy but money will corrupt and putrify it, like victual under the line. You are happy in England, my lord : here they sell justice with those weights they press men to death with. O horrible salary !

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR : Fie, fie, Flamineo !

[*Exeunt* AMBASSADORS.

FLAMINEO : Bells ne'er ring well, till they are at their full pitch ; and I hope yon cardinal shall never have the grace to pray well till he come to the scaffold. If they were racked now to know the confederacy,—but your noblemen are privileged from the rack ; and well may, for a little thing would pull some of them a-pieces afore they came to their arraignment. Religion, oh, how it is commedled with policy ! The first bloodshed in the world happened about religion. Would I were a Jew !

MARCELLO : Oh, there are too many.

FLAMINEO : You are deceived : there are not Jews enough, priests enough, nor gentlemen enough.

MARCELLO : How ?

FLAMINEO : I'll prove it ; for if there were Jews enough, so many Christians would not turn usurers ; if priests enough, one should not have six benefices ; and if gentlemen enough, so many early mushrooms, whose best growth sprang from a dunghill, should not aspire to gentility. Farewell : let others live by begging ; be thou one of them practise the art of Wolner in England, to swallow all 's given thee ; and yet let one purgation make thee as hungry again as fellows that work in a saw-pit. I'll go hear the screech-owl. [*Exit.*

LODOVICO (*aside*) : This was Brachiano's pander and 'tis strange
That, in such open and apparent guilt
Of his adulterous sister, he dare utter
So scandalous a passion. I must wind him.

Re-enter FLAMINEO.

FLAMINEO (*aside*) : How dares this banished count return to Rome,
His pardon not yet purchased ? I have heard
The deceased duchess gave him pension,
And that he came along from Padua
I' the train of the young prince. There's somewhat in 't :
Physicians, that cure poisons, still do work
With counter-poisons.

MARCELLO : Mark this strange encounter.

FLAMINEO (*to* LODOVICO) : The god of melancholy turn thy gall to poison,
And let the stigmatic wrinkles in thy face,
Like to the boisterous waves in a rough tide,
One still overtake another.

LODOVICO : I do thank thee,
And I do wish ingeniously for thy sake
The dog-days all year long.

FLAMINEO : How croaks the raven ?
Is our good duchess dead ?

LODOVICO : Dead.

FLAMINEO : O fate !
Misfortune comes, like the coroner's business,
Huddle upon huddle.

LODOVICO : Shalt thou and I join house-keeping ?

FLAMINEO : Yes, content :
Let's be unsociably sociable,—

LODOVICO : Sit some three days together, and discourse—
FLAMINEO : Only with making faces : lie in our clothes,—
LODOVICO : With faggots for our pillows,—
FLAMINEO : And be lousy—
LODOVICO : In taffata linings ; that's genteel melancholy :
Sleep all day,—
FLAMINEO : Yes ; and, like your melancholic hare,
Feed after midnight.—
We are observed : see how yon couple grieve!
LODOVICO : What a strange creature is a laughing fool !
As if man were created to no use
But only to show his teeth.
FLAMINEO : I'll tell thee what,—
It would do well, instead of looking-glasses,
To set one's face each morning by a saucer
Of a witch's congealed blood.
LODOVICO : Precious gue !
We'll never part.
FLAMINEO : Never, till the beggary of courtiers,
The discontent of churchmen, want of soldiers,
And all the creatures that hang manacled,
Worse than strappadoed, on the lowest felly
Of Fortune's wheel, be taught, in our two lives,
To scorn that world which life of means deprives.

Enter ANTONELLI *and* GASPARO.

ANTONELLI : My lord, I bring good news. The Pope, on 's
death-bed,
At the earnest suit of the Great Duke of Florence,
Hath signed your pardon, and restored unto you——
LODOVICO : I thank you for your news.—Look up again,
Flamineo ; see my pardon.
FLAMINEO : Why do you laugh ?
There was no such condition in our covenant.
LODOVICO : Why ?
FLAMINEO : You shall not seem a happier man than I :
You know our vow, sir ; if you will be merry,
Do it i' the like posture as if some great man
Sate while his enemy were executed ;
Though it be very lechery unto thee,
Do 't with a crabbèd politician's face.
LODOVICO : Your sister is a damnable whore.
FLAMINEO : Ha !
LODOVICO : Look you, I spake that laughing.
FLAMINEO : Dost ever think to speak again ?
LODOVICO : Do you hear ?
Wilt sell me forty ounces of her blood
To water a mandrake ?
FLAMINEO : Poor lord, you did vow
To live a lousy creature.
LODOVICO : Yes.
FLAMINEO : Like one
That had for ever forfeited the daylight
By being in debt.

LODOVICO : Ha, ha !
FLAMINEO : I do not greatly wonder you do break ;
Your lordship learned it long since. But I'll tell you——
LODOVICO : What ?
FLAMINEO : And 't shall stick by you,—
LODOVICO : I long for it.
FLAMINEO : This laughter scurvily becomes your face :
If you will not be melancholy, be angry.
[*Strikes him.*
See, now I laugh too.
MARCELLO : You are to blame : I'll force you hence.
LODOVICO : Unhand me.
[*Exeunt* MARCELLO *and* FLAMINEO.
That e'er I should be forced to right myself
Upon a pander !
ANTONELLI : My lord,—
LODOVICO : H'ad been as good
Met with his fist a thunderbolt.
GASPARO : How this shows !
LODOVICO : Ud's death, how did my sword miss him ? These rogues
That are most weary of their lives still scape
The greatest dangers.
A pox upon him ! all his reputation,
Nay, all the goodness of his family,
Is not worth half this earthquake :
I learned it of no fencer to shake thus :
Come, I'll forget him, and go drink some wine. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in the Palace of* FRANCISCO.

Enter FRANCISCO *and* MONTICELSO.

MONTICELSO : Come, come, my lord, untie your folded thoughts,
And let them dangle loose as a bride's hair.
Your sister's poisoned.
FRANCISCO : Far be it from my thoughts
To seek revenge.
MONTICELSO : What, are you turned all marble ?
FRANCISCO : Shall I defy him, and impose a war
Most burdensome on my poor subjects' necks,
Which at my will I have not power to end ?
You know, for all the murders, rapes, and thefts,
Committed in the horrid lust of war,
He that unjustly caused it first proceed
Shall find it in his grave and in his seed.
MONTICELSO : That's not the course I'd wish you ; pray, observe me.
We see that undermining more prevails
Than doth the cannon. Bear your wrongs concealed,
And, patient as the tortoise, let this camel
Stalk o'er your back unbruised : sleep with the lion,
And let this brood of secure foolish mice
Play with your nostrils, till the time be ripe
For the bloody audit and the fatal gripe :

Aim like a cunning fowler, close one eye,
That you the better may your game espy.

FRANCISCO : Free me, my innocence, from treacherous acts !
I know there's thunder yonder ; and I'll stand
Like a safe valley, which low bends the knee
To some aspiring mountain ; since I know
Treason, like spiders weaving nets for flies,
By her foul work is found, and in it dies.
To pass away these thoughts, my honoured lord,
It is reported you possess a book,
Wherein you have quoted, by intelligence,
The names of all notorious offenders
Lurking about the city.

MONTICELSO : Sir, I do ;
And some there are which call it my black book :
Well may the title hold ; for though it teach not
The art of conjuring, yet in it lurk
The names of many devils.

FRANCISCO : Pray, let's see it.

MONTICELSO : I'll fetch it to your lordship. [*Exit.*

FRANCISCO : Monticelso,
I will not trust thee ; but in all my plots
I'll rest as jealous as a town besieged.
Thou canst not reach what I intend to act :
Your flax soon kindles, soon is out again :
But gold slow heats, and long will hot remain.

Re-enter MONTICELSO, *presents* FRANCISCO *with a book.*

MONTICELSO : 'Tis here, my lord.

FRANCISCO : First, your intelligencers, pray, let's see.

MONTICELSO : Their number rises strangely ; and some of them
You'd take for honest men. Next are panders,—
These are your pirates ; and these following leaves
For base rogues that undo young gentlemen
By taking up commodities, for politic bankrupts ;
For fellows that are bawds to their own wives,
Only to put off horses, and slight jewels,
Clocks, defaced plate, and such commodities,
At birth of their first children.

FRANCISCO : Are there such ?

MONTICELSO : These are for impudent bawds
That go in men's apparel ; for usurers
That share with scriveners for their good reportage ;
For lawyers that will antedate their writs :
And some divines you might find folded there,
But that I slip them o'er for conscience's sake.
Here is a general catalogue of knaves :
A man might study all the prisons o'er,
Yet never attain this knowledge.

FRANCISCO : Murderers !
Fold down the leaf, I pray.
Good my lord, let me borrow this strange doctrine.

MONTICELSO : Pray, use 't, my lord.

FRANCISCO: I do assure your lordship,
You are a worthy member of the state,
And have done infinite good in your discovery
Of these offenders.
MONTICELSO: Somewhat, sir.
FRANCISCO: O God!
Better than tribute of wolves paid in England:
'Twill hang their skins o' the hedge.
MONTICELSO: I must make bold
To leave your lordship.
FRANCISCO: Dearly, sir, I thank you:
If any ask for me at court, report
You have left me in the company of knaves.

[*Exit* MONTICELSO.

I gather now by this, some cunning fellow
That's my lord's officer, one that lately skipped
From a clerk's desk up to a justice' chair,
Hath made this knavish summons, and intends,
As the Irish rebels wont were to sell heads,
So to make prize of these. And thus it happens,
Your poor rogues pay for 't which have not the means
To present bribe in fist: the rest o' the band
Are razed out of the knaves' record; or else
My lord he winks at them with easy will;
His man grows rich, the knaves are the knaves still.
But to the use I'll make of it; it shall serve
To point me out a list of murderers,
Agents for any villainy. Did I want
Ten leash of courtezans, it would furnish me;
Nay, laundress three armies. That in so little paper
Should lie the undoing of so many men!
'Tis not so big as twenty declarations.
See the corrupted use some make of books:
Divinity, wrested by some factious blood,
Draws swords, swells battles, and o'erthrows all good.
To fashion my revenge more seriously,
Let me remember my dead sister's face;
Call for her picture? no, I'll close mine eyes,
And in a melancholic thought I'll frame.

Enter ISABELLA'S GHOST.

Her figure 'fore me. Now I ha 't:—how strong
Imagination works! how she can frame
Things which are not! Methinks she stands afore me,
And by the quick idea of my mind,
Were my skill pregnant, I could draw her picture.
Thought, as a subtle juggler, makes us deem
Things supernatural, which yet have cause
Common as sickness. 'Tis my melancholy.—
How cam'st thou by thy death?—How idle am I
To question mine own idleness!—Did ever
Man dream awake till now?—Remove this object;
Out of my brain with 't! What have I to do
With tombs, or death-beds, funerals, or tears,

That have to meditate upon revenge? [*Exit* GHOST.
So, now 'tis ended, like an old wives' story:
Statesmen think often they see stranger sights
Than madmen. Come, to this weighty business:
My tragedy must have some idle mirth in 't,
Else it will never pass. I am in love,
In love with Corombona; and my suit
Thus halts to her in verse.— [*Writes.*
I have done it rarely: O the fate of princes!
I am so used to frequent flattery,
That, being alone, I now flatter myself:
But it will serve; 'tis sealed.

Enter SERVANT.

Bear this
To the house of convertites, and watch your leisure
To give it to the hands of Corombona,
Or to the matron, when some followers
Of Brachiano may be by. Away! [*Exit* SERVANT.
He that deals all by strength, his wit is shallow:
When a man's head goes through, each limb will follow.
The engine for my business, bold Count Lodowick:
'Tis gold must such an instrument procure;
With empty fist no man doth falcons lure.
Brachiano, I am now fit for thy encounter:
Like the wild Irish, I'll ne'er think thee dead
Till I can play at football with thy head.
Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo. [*Exit.*

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*A Room in the House of* CONVERTITES.

Enter the MATRON *and* FLAMINEO.

MATRON: Should it be known the duke hath such recourse
To your imprisoned sister, I were like
To incur much damage by it.
FLAMINEO: Not a scruple!
The Pope lies on his death-bed, and their heads
Are troubled now with other business
Than guarding of a lady.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT: Yonder's Flamineo in conference
With the matrona.—Let me speak with you;
I would entreat you to deliver for me
This letter to the fair Vittoria——
MATRON: I shall, sir.
SERVANT: With all care and secrecy.
Hereafter you shall know me, and receive
Thanks for this courtesy. [*Exit.*
FLAMINEO: How now? what's that?
MATRON: A letter.
FLAMINEO: To my sister? I'll see 't delivered. [*Exit* MATRON.

Enter BRACHIANO.

BRACHIANO : What's that you read, Flamineo ?
FLAMINEO : Look.
BRACHIANO : Ha !
(*Reads*) ' To the most unfortunate, his best respected Vittoria.'—
Who was the mesenger ?
FLAMINEO : I know not.
BRACHIANO : No ?
Who sent it ?

FLAMINEO : Ud's foot, you speak as if a man
Should know what fowl is coffined in a baked meat
Afore you cut it up.
BRACHIANO : I'll open 't, were 't her heart.
What's here subscribed ?
' Florence ! ' this juggling is gross and palpable :
I have found out the conveyance.—Read it, read it !

FLAMINEO (*reads*) : ' Your tears I'll turn to triumphs, be but mine :
Your prop is fall'n : I pity, that a vine,
Which princes heretofore have longed to gather,
Wanting supporters, now should fade and wither.'
Wine, i' faith, my lord, with lees would serve his turn—
' Your sad imprisonment I'll soon uncharm,
And with a princely uncontrollèd arm
Lead you to Florence, where my love and care
Shall hang your wishes in my silver hair.'—
A halter on his strange equivocation !—
' Nor for my years return me the sad willow :
Who prefer blossoms before fruit that's mellow ? '—
Rotten, on my knowledge, with lying too long i' the bed-straw.—
' And all the lines of age this line convinces,
The gods never wax old, no more do princes.'—
A pox on 't, tear it ; let's have no more atheists, for God's sake.

BRACHIANO : Ud's death, I'll cut her into atomies,
And let th' irregular north wind sweep her up,
And blow her into his nostrils ! Where's this whore ?
FLAMINEO : That—what do you call her ?
BRACHIANO : Oh, I could be mad,
Prevent the cursed disease she'll bring me to,
And tear my hair off ! Where's this changeable stuff ?
FLAMINEO : O'er head and ears in water, I assure you :
She is not for your wearing.
BRACHIANO : In, you pander !
FLAMINEO : What, me, my lord ? am I your dog ?
BRACHIANO : A blood-hound !
Do you brave, do you stand me ?
FLAMINEO : Stand you ! let those that have diseases run ;
I need no plasters.
BRACHIANO : Would you be kicked ?

FLAMINEO : Would you have your neck broke ?
I tell you, duke, I am not in Russia ;
My shins must be kept whole.
BRACHIANO : Do you know me ?

FLAMINEO : O, my lord, methodically :
As in this world there are degrees of evils,
So in this world there are degrees of devils.
You're a great duke, I your poor secretary.
I do look now for a Spanish fig, or an Italian salad, daily.
BRACHIANO : Pander, ply your convoy, and leave your prating.
FLAMINEO : All your kindness to me is like that miserable courtesy of Polyphemus to Ulysses ; you reserve me to be devoured last : you would dig turfs out of my grave to feed your larks ; that would be music to you. Come, I'll lead you to her.
BRACHIANO : Do you face me ?
FLAMINEO : Oh, sir, I would not go before a politic enemy with my back towards him, though there were behind me a whirlpool.

SCENE II.—VITTORIA'S *Room in the House of Convertites.*

Enter VITTORIA, BRACHIANO, *and* FLAMINEO.

BRACHIANO : Can you read, mistress ? look upon that letter :
There are no characters nor hieroglyphics ;
You need no comment : I am grown your receiver.
God's precious ! you shall be a brave great lady,
A stately and advanced whore.
VITTORIA : Say, sir ?
BRACHIANO : Come, come, let's see your cabinet, discover
Your treasury of love-letters. Death and Furies !
I'll see them all.
VITTORIA : Sir, upon my soul,
I have not any. Whence was this directed ?
BRACHIANO : Confusion on your politic ignorance !
You are reclaimed, are you ? I'll give you the bells,
And let you fly to the devil.
FLAMINEO : Ware hawk, my lord !
VITTORIA : 'Florence' ! this is some treacherous plot, my lord :
To me he ne'er was lovely, I protest,
So much as in my sleep.
BRACHIANO : Right ! they are plots.
Your beauty ! Oh, ten thousand curses on 't !
How long have I beheld the devil in crystal ?
Thou hast led me, like an heathen sacrifice,
With music and with fatal yokes of flowers,
To my eternal ruin. Woman to man
Is either a god or a wolf.
VITTORIA : My lord,—
BRACHIANO : Away !
We'll be as differing as two adamants ;
The one shall shun the other. What, dost weep ?
Procure but ten of thy dissembling trade,
Ye'd furnish all the Irish funerals
With howling past wild Irish.
FLAMINEO : Fie, my lord !
BRACHIANO : That hand, that cursed hand, which I have wearied
With doting kisses !—O my sweetest duchess,
How lovely art thou now !—My loose thoughts

Scatter like quicksilver : I was bewitched ;
For all the world speaks ill of thee.

VITTORIA : No matter :
I'll live so now, I'll make that world recant,
And change her speeches. You did name your duchess.

BRACHIANO : Whose death God pardon !

VITTORIA : Whose death God revenge
On thee, most godless duke !

FLAMINEO (*aside*) : Now for two whirlwinds !

VITTORIA : What have I gained by thee but infamy ?
Thou hast stained the spotless honour of my house,
And frighted thence noble society :
Like those, which, sick o' the palsy and retain[ing]
Ill-scenting foxes 'bout them, are still shunned
By those of choicer nostrils. What do you call this house ?
Is this your palace ? did not the judge style it
A house of penitent whores ? who sent me to it ?
Who hath the honour to advance Vittoria
To this incontinent college ? is 't not you ?
Is 't not your high preferment ? Go, go, brag
How many ladies you have undone like me.
Fare you well, sir ; let me hear no more of you :
I had a limb corrupted to an ulcer,
But I have cut it off ; and now I'll go
Weeping to Heaven on crutches. For your gifts,
I will return them all ; and I do wish
That I could make you full executor
To all my sins. Oh, that I could toss myself
Into a grave as quickly ! for all thou art worth
I'll not shed one tear more,—I'll burst first.
[*She throws herself upon a bed.*

BRACHIANO : I have drunk Lethe.—Vittoria !
My dearest happiness ! Vittoria !
What do you ail, my love ? why do you weep ?

VITTORIA : Yes, I now weep poniards, do you see ?

BRACHIANO : Are not those matchless eyes mine ?

VITTORIA : I had rather
They were not matches !

BRACHIANO : Is not this lip mine ?

VITTORIA : Yes ; thus to bite it off, rather than give it thee.

FLAMINEO : Turn to my lord, good sister.

VITTORIA : Hence, you pander !

FLAMINEO : Pander ! am I the author of your sin ?

VITTORIA : Yes ; he's a base thief that a thief lets in.

FLAMINEO : We're blown up, my lord.

BRACHIANO : Wilt thou hear me ?
Once to be jealous of thee, is to express
That I will love thee everlastingly,
And never more be jealous.

VITTORIA : O thou fool,
Whose greatness hath by much o'ergrown thy wit !
What dar'st thou do that I not dare to suffer,
Excepting to be still thy whore ? for that,

In the sea's bottom sooner thou shalt make
A bonfire.

FLAMINEO : O, no oaths, for God's sake !

BRACHIANO : Will you hear me !

VITTORIA : Never.

FLAMINEO : What a damned imposthume is a woman's will !
Can nothing break it ?—Fie, fie, my lord,
Women are caught as you take tortoises ;
She must be turned on her back.—Sister, by this hand,
I am on your side.—Come, come, you have wronged her :
What a strange credulous man were you, my lord,
To think the Duke of Florence would love her !
Will any mercer take another's ware
When once 'tis toused and sullied ?—And yet, sister,
How scurvily this frowardness becomes you !
Young leverets stand not long ; and women's anger
Should, like their flight, procure a little sport ;
A full cry for a quarter of an hour,
And then be put to the dead quat.

BRACHIANO : Shall these eyes,
Which have so long time dwelt upon your face,
Be now put out ?

FLAMINEO : No cruel landlady i' th' world, which lends forth groats
To broom-men, and takes use for them, would do 't.—
Hand her, my lord, and kiss her : be not like
A ferret, to let go your hold with blowing.

BRACHIANO : Let us renew right hands.

VITTORIA : Hence !

BRACHIANO : Never shall rage
Or the forgetful wine make me commit
Like fault.

FLAMINEO : Now you are i' the way on 't, follow 't hard.

BRACHIANO : Be thou at peace with me, let all the world
Threaten the cannon.

FLAMINEO : Mark his penitence :
Best natures do commit the grossest faults,
When they're given o'er to jealousy, as best wine,
Dying, makes strongest vinegar. I'll tell you,—
The sea's more rough and raging than calm rivers,
But not so sweet nor wholesome. A quiet woman
Is a still water under a great bridge ;
A man may shoot her safely.

VITTORIA : Oh, ye dissembling men !—

FLAMINEO : We sucked that, sister,
From women's breasts, in our first infancy.

VITTORIA : To add misery to misery !

BRACHIANO : Sweetest,—

VITTORIA : Am I not low enough ?
Aye, aye, your good heart gathers like a snowball,
Now your affection's cold.

FLAMINEO : Ud's foot, it shall melt
To a heart again, or all the wine in Rome
Shall run o' the lees for 't.

VITTORIA : Your dog or hawk should be rewarded better
Than I have been. I'll speak not one word more.
FLAMINEO : Stop her mouth with a sweet kiss, my lord. So,
Now the tide's turned, the vessel's come about.
He's a sweet armful. Oh, we curled-haired men
Are still most kind to women ! This is well.
BRACHIANO : That you should chide thus !
FLAMINEO : O, sir, your little chimneys
Do ever cast most smoke ! I sweat for you.
Couple together with as deep a silence
As did the Grecians in their wooden horse.
My lord, supply your promises with deeds ;
You know that painted meat no hunger feeds.
BRACHIANO : Stay ! ingrateful Rome—
FLAMINEO : Rome ! it deserves
To be called Barbary for our villainous usage.
BRACHIANO : Soft ! the same project which the Duke of Florence
(Whether in love or gullery I know not)
Laid down for her escape, will I pursue.
FLAMINEO : And no time fitter than this night, my lord :
The Pope being dead, and all the cardinals entered
The conclave for the electing a new Pope ;
The city in a great confusion ;
We may attire her in a page's suit,
Lay her post horse [s], take shipping, and amain
For Padua.
BRACHIANO : I'll instantly steal forth the Prince Giovanni,
And make for Padua. You two with your old mother,
And young Marcello that attends on Florence,
If you can work him to it, follow me :
I will advance you all : —for you, Vittoria,
Think of a duchess' title.
FLAMINEO : Lo, you, sister !—
Stay, my lord ; I'll tell you a tale. The crocodile, which lives in the river Nilus, hath a worm breeds i' the teeth of 't, which puts it to extreme anguish : a little bird, no bigger than a wren, is barber-surgeon to this crocodile ; flies into the jaws of 't, picks out the worm, and brings present remedy. The fish, glad of ease, but ingrateful to her that did it, that the bird may not talk largely of her abroad for non-payment, closeth her chaps, intending to swallow her, and so put her to perpetual silence. But nature, loathing such ingratitude, hath armed this bird with a quill or prick on the top o' th' head, which wounds the crocodile i' the mouth, forceth her open her bloody prison, and away flies the pretty tooth-picker from her cruel patient.
BRACHIANO : Your application is, I have not rewarded
The service you have done me.
FLAMINEO : No, my lord.—
You, sister, are the crocodile : you are blemished in your fame, my lord cures it ; and though the comparison hold not in every particle, yet observe, remember what good the bird with the prick i' the head hath done you, and scorn ingratitude.—
(*Aside*) It may appear to some ridiculous

Thus to talk knave and madman, and sometimes
Come in with a dried sentence, stuft with sage :
But this allows my varying of shapes ;
Knaves do grow great by being great men's apes. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Before the Vatican.*

Enter FRANCISCO, LODOVICO, GASPARO, *and six* AMBASSADORS.

FRANCISCO : So, my lord, I commend your diligence.
Guard well the conclave ; and, as the order is,
Let none have conference with the cardinals.
LODOVICO : I shall, my lord.—Room for the ambassadors !
GASPARO : They're wondrous brave to-day : why do they wear
These several habits ?
LODOVICO : Oh, sir, they're knights
Of several orders : that lord i' the black cloak,
With the silver cross, is Knight of Rhodes ; the next,
Knight of St. Michael ; that, of the Golden Fleece ;
The Frenchman, there, Knight of the Holy Ghost ;
My lord of Savoy, Knight of the Annunciation ;
The Englishman is Knight of the honoured Garter,
Dedicated unto their saint, St. George. I could
Describe to you their several institutions,
With the laws annexed to their orders ; but that time
Permits not such discovery.
FRANCISCO : Where's Count Lodowick ?
LODOVICO : Here, my lord.
FRANCISCO : 'Tis o' the point of dinner time :
Marshal the cardinals' service.
LODOVICO : Sir, I shall.

Enter SERVANTS, *with several dishes covered.*

Stand, let me search your dish : who's this for ?
SERVANT : For my Lord Cardinal Monticelso.
LODOVICO : Whose this ?
SERVANT : For my Lord Cardinal of Bourbon.
FRENCH AMBASSADOR : Why doth he search the dishes ? to observe
What meat is drest ?
ENGLISH AMBASSADOR : No, sir, but to prevent
Lest any letters should be conveyed in,
To bribe or to solicit the advancement
Of any cardinal. When first they enter,
'Tis lawful for the ambassador of princes
To enter with them, and to make their suit
For any man their prince affecteth best ;
But after, till a general election,
No man may speak with them.
LODOVICO : You that attend on the lord cardinals,
Open the window, and receive their viands !
AN OFFICER (*at the window*) : You must return the service : the
lord cardinals
Are busied 'bout electing of the Pope ;
They have given o'er scrutiny, and are fall'n
To admiration.

LODOVICO : Away, away ! [*Exeunt* SERVANTS.

FRANCISCO : I'll lay a thousand ducats you hear news.
Of a Pope presently. Hark ! sure, he's elected :
Behold, my Lord of Arragon appears
On the church battlements.

ARRAGON (*on the church battlements*) : Denuntio vobis gaudium magnum. Reverendissimus cardinalis Lorenzo de Monticelso electus est in sedem apostolicam, et elegit sibi nomen Paulum Quartum.

OMNES : Vivat sanctus pater Paulus Quartus !

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT : Vittoria, my lord,—
FRANCISCO : Well, what of her ?
SERVANT : Is fled the city,—
FRANCISCO : Ha ?
SERVANT : With Duke Brachiano.
FRANCISCO : Fled ? Where's the Prince Giovanni ?
SERVANT : Gone with his father.

FRANCISCO : Let the matrona of the convertites
Be apprehended.—Fled ! Oh, damnable ! [*Exit* SERVANT.
(*Aside*) How fortunate are my wishes ! why, 'twas this
I only laboured : I did send the letter
To instruct him what to do. Thy fame, fond duke,
I first have poisoned ; directed thee the way
To marry a whore : what can be worse ? This follows,—
The hand must act to drown the passionate tongue :
I scorn to wear a sword and prate of wrong.

Enter MONTICELSO *in state.*

MONTICELSO : Concedimus vobis apostolicam benedictionem et remissionem peccatorum.
My lord reports Vittoria Corombona
Is stol'n from forth the house of convertites
By Brachiano, and they're fled the city.
Now, though this be the first day of our state,
We cannot better please the divine power
Than to sequester from the holy Church
These cursed persons. Make it therefore known,
We do denounce excommunication
Against them both : all that are theirs in Rome
We likewise banish. Set on.

[*Exeunt* MONTICELSO, *his train,* AMBASSADORS, *&c.*

FRANCISCO : Come, dear Lodovico ;
You have ta'en the sacrament to prosecute
The intended murder.

LODOVICO ; With all constancy.
But, sir, I wonder you'll engage yourself
In person, being a great prince.

FRANCISCO : Divert me not.
Most of his court are of my faction,
And some are of my council. Noble friend

Our danger shall be 'like in this design :
Give leave, part of the glory may be mine.
[*Exeunt* FRANCISCO *and* GASPARO.

Re-enter MONTICELSO.

MONTICELSO : Why did the Duke of Florence with such care
Labour your pardon ? say.
LODOVICO : Italian beggars will resolve you that,
Who, begging of an alms, bid those they beg of,
Do good for their own sakes ; or 't may be,
He spreads his bounty with a sowing hand,
Like kings, who many times give out of measure,
Not for desert so much, as for their pleasure.
MONTICELSO : I know you're cunning. Come, what devil was that
That you were raising ?
LODOVICO : Devil, my lord ?
MONTICELSO : I ask you
How doth the duke employ you, that his bonnet
Fell with such compliment unto his knee,
When he departed from you ?
LODOVICO : Why, my lord,
He told me of a resty Barbary horse
Which he would fain have brought to the career,
The sault, and the ring-galliard ; now, my lord,
I have a rare French rider.
MONTICELSO : Take you heed
Lest the jade break your neck. Do you put me off
With your wild horse-tricks ? Sirrah, you do lie.
Oh, thou'rt a foul black cloud, and thou dost threat
A violent storm !
LODOVICO : Storms are i' the air, my lord :
I am too low to storm.
MONTICELSO : Wretched creature !
I know that thou art fashioned for all ill,
Like dogs that once get blood, they'll ever kill.
About some murder ? was 't not ?
LODOVICO : I'll not tell you :
And yet I care not greatly if I do ;
Marry, with this preparation. Holy father,
I come not to you as an intelligencer,
But as a penitent sinner : What I utter
Is in confession merely ; which you know
Must never be revealed.
MONTICELSO : You have o'erta'en me.
LODOVICO : Sir, I did love Brachiano's duchess dearly,
Or rather I pursued her with hot lust,
Though she ne'er knew on 't. She was poisoned ;
Upon my soul, she was ; for which I have sworn
To avenge her murder.
MONTICELSO : To the Duke of Florence
LODOVICO : To him I have.
MONTICELSO : Miserable creature !
If thou persist in this, 'tis damnable.
Dost thou imagine thou canst slide on blood,

And not be tainted with a shameful fall?
Or, like the black and melancholic yew-tree,
Dost think to root thyself in dead men's graves,
And yet to prosper? Instruction to thee
Comes like sweet showers to over-hardened ground;
They wet, but pierce not deep. And so I leave thee,
With all the Furies hanging 'bout thy neck,
Till by thy penitence thou remove this evil,
In conjuring from thy breast that cruel devil. [*Exit.*

LODOVICO: I'll give it o'er; he says 'tis damnable,
Besides I did expect his suffrage,
By reason of Camillo's death.

Re-enter FRANCISCO *with a* SERVANT.

FRANCISCO: Do you know that count?
SERVANT: Yes, my lord.
FRANCISCO: Bear him these thousand ducats to his lodging;
Tell him the Pope hath sent them.—(*Aside*) Happily
That will confirm [him] more than all the rest. [*Exit.*

SERVANT: Sir,—
LODOVICO: To me, sir?
SERVANT: His Holiness hath sent you
A thousand crowns, and wills you, if you travel,
To make him your patron for intelligence.

LODOVICO: His creature ever to be commanded. [*Exit* SERVANT.
Why, now 'tis come about. He railed upon me;
And yet these crowns were told out and laid ready
Before he knew my voyage. O the art,
The modest form of greatness! that do sit,
Like brides at wedding-dinners, with their looks turned
From the least wanton jest, their puling stomach
Sick of the modesty, when their thoughts are loose,
Even acting of those hot and lustful sports
Are to ensue about midnight: such his cunning:
He sounds my depth thus with a golden plummet.
I am doubly armed now. Now to the act of blood.
There's but three Furies found in spacious hell,
But in a great man's breast three thousand dwell. [*Exit.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—*A Room in* BRACHIANO'S *Palace at Padua.*

A passage over the stage of BRACHIANO, FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, HORTENSIO, VITTORIA, CORNELIA, ZANCHE, *and others.*

Then re-enter FLAMINEO *and* HORTENSIO.

FLAMINEO: In all the weary minutes of my life,
Day ne'er broke up till now. This marriage
Confirms me happy.
HORTENSIO: 'Tis a good assurance.
Saw you not yet the Moor that's come to court?
FLAMINEO: Yes, and conferred with him i' the duke's closet:
I have not seen a goodlier personage,
Nor ever talked with man better experienced

In state affairs or rudiments of war :
He hath, by report, served the Venetian
In Candy these twice seven years, and been chief
In many a bold design.

HORTENSIO : What are those two
That bear him company ?

FLAMINEO : Two noblemen of Hungary that, living in the emperor's service as commanders, eight years since, contrary to the expectation of all the court, entered into religion, into the strict order of Capuchins : but, being not well settled in their undertaking, they left their order, and returned to court ; for which, being after troubled in conscience, they vowed their service against the enemies of Christ, went to Malta, were there knighted, and in their return back, at this great solemnity, they are resolved for ever to forsake the world, and settle themselves here in a house of Capuchins in Padua.

HORTENSIO : 'Tis strange.

FLAMINEO : One thing makes it so : they have vowed for ever to wear, next their bare bodies, those coats of mail they served in.

HORTENSIO : Hard penance ! Is the Moor a Christian ?

FLAMINEO : He is.

HORTENSIO : Why proffers he his service to our duke ?

FLAMINEO : Because he understands there's like to grow
Some wars between us and the Duke of Florence,
In which he hopes employment.
I never saw one in a stern bold look
Wear more command, nor in a lofty phrase
Express more knowing or more deep contempt
Of our slight airy courtiers. He talks
As if he had travelled all the princes' courts
Of Christendom : in all things strives to express,
That all that should dispute with him may know,
Glories, like glow-worms, afar off shine bright,
But looked to near, have neither heat nor light.—
The duke !

Re-enter BRACHIANO ; *with* FRANCISCO *disguised like* MULINASSAR, LODOVICO *disguised as* CARLO, GASPARO *disguised as* PEDRO, *bearing their swords and helmets ; and* MARCELLO.

BRACHIANO : You are nobly welcome. We have heard at full
Your honourable service 'gainst the Turk.
To you, brave Mulinassar, we assign
A competent pension : and are inly sorry,
The vows of those two worthy gentlemen
Make them incapable of our proffered bounty.
Your wish is, you may leave your warlike swords
For monuments in our chapel : I accept it
As a great honour done me, and must crave
Your leave to furnish out our duchess' revels.
Only one thing, as the last vanity
You e'er shall view, deny me not to stay
To see a barriers prepared to-night :
You shall have private standings. It hath pleased
The great ambassadors of several princes,

In their return from Rome to their own countries,
To grace our marriage, and to honour me
With such a kind of sport.

FRANCISCO : I shall persuade them
To stay, my lord.

[BRACHIANO] : Set on there to the presence !

[*Exeunt* BRACHIANO, FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, *and* HORTENSIO.

LODOVICO : Noble my lord, most fortunately welcome !

[*The Conspirators here embrace.*

You have our vows, sealed with the sacrament,
To second your attempts.

GASPARO : And all things ready :
He could not have invented his own ruin
(Had he despaired) with more propriety.

LODOVICO : You would not take my way.

FRANCISCO : 'Tis better ordered.

LODOVICO : T' have poisoned his prayer-book, or a pair of beads
The pummel of his saddle, his looking-glass,
Or th' handle of his racket,—Oh, that, that !
That while he had been bandying at tennis,
He might have sworn himself to hell, and strook
His soul into the hazard ! Oh, my lord,
I would have our plot be ingenious,
And have it hereafter recorded for example,
Rather than borrow example.

FRANCISCO : There's no way
More speeding than this thought on.

LODOVICO : On, then.

FRANCISCO : And yet methinks that this revenge is poor,
Because it steals upon him like a thief.
To have ta'en him by the casque in a pitched field,
Led him to Florence !—

LODOVICO : It had been rare : and there
Have crowned him with a wreath of stinking garlic,
T' have shown the sharpness of his government
And rankness of his lust.—Flamineo comes.

[*Exeunt* LODOVICO *and* GASPARO.

Re-enter FLAMINEO, *with* MARCELLO *and* ZANCHE.

MARCELLO : Why doth this devil haunt you, say ?

FLAMINEO : I know not ;
For, by this light, I do not conjure for her.
'Tis not so great a cunning as men think,
To raise the devil ; for here's one up already :
The greatest cunning were to lay him down.

MARCELLO : She is your shame.

FLAMINEO : I prithee, pardon her.
In faith, you see, women are like to burs,
Where their affection throws them, there they'll stick.

ZANCHE : That is my countryman, a goodly person :
When's he's at leisure, I'll discourse with him
In our own language.

FLAMINEO : I beseech you do. [*Exit* ZANCHE.
How is 't, brave soldier ? Oh, that I had seen
Some of your iron days ! I pray, relate
Some of your service to us.

FRANCISCO : 'Tis a ridiculous thing for a man to be his own chronicle : I did never wash my mouth with mine own praise for fear of getting a stinking breath.

MARCELLO : You're too stoical. The duke will expect other discourse from you.

FRANCISCO : I shall never flatter him : I have studied man too much to do that. What difference is between the duke and I ? no more than between two bricks, all made of one clay ; only 't may be one is placed on the top of a turret, the other in the bottom of a well, by mere chance. If I were placed as high as the duke, I should stick as fast, make as fair a show, and bear out weather equally.

FLAMINEO (*aside*) : If this soldier had a patent to beg in churches, then he would tell them stories.

MARCELLO : I have been a soldier too.

FRANCISCO : How have you thrived ?

MARCELLO : Faith, poorly.

FRANCISCO : That's the misery of peace : only outsides are then respected. As ships seem very great upon the river, which show very little upon the seas, so some men i' the court seem colossuses in a chamber, who, if they came into the field, would appear pitiful pigmies.

FLAMINEO : Give me a fair room yet hung with arras, and some great cardinal to lug me by the ears as his endeared minion.

FRANCISCO : And thou mayst do the devil knows what villainy.

FLAMINEO : And safely.

FRANCISCO : Right : you shall see in the country, in harvest-time, pigeons, though they destroy never so much corn, the farmer dare not present the fowling-piece to them : why ? because they belong to the lord of the manor ; whilst your poor sparrows, that belong to the Lord of Heaven, they go to the pot for 't.

FLAMINEO : I will now give you some politic instructions. The duke says he will give you a pension : that's but bare promise ; get it under his hand. For I have known men that have come from serving against the Turk, for three or four months they have had pension to buy them new wooden legs and fresh plasters ; but, after, 'twas not to be had. And this miserable courtesy shows as if a tormentor should give hot cordial drinks to one three-quarters dead o' the rack, only to fetch the miserable soul again to endure more dog-days.

[*Exit* FRANCISCO.

Re-enter HORTENSIO *and* ZANCHE, *with a* YOUNG LORD *and two more.*

How now, gallants ! what, are they ready for the barriers ?

YOUNG LORD : Yes ; the lords are putting on their armour.

HORTENSIO : What's he ?

FLAMINEO : A new upstart ; one that swears like a falconer, and will lie in the duke's ear day by day, like a maker of almanacs :

and yet I knew him, since he came to the court, smell worse of sweat than an under tennis-court-keeper.

HORTENSIO : Look you, yonder's your sweet mistress.

FLAMINEO : Thou art my sworn brother : I'll tell thee, I do love that Moor, that witch, very constrainedly. She knows some of my villainy. I do love her just as a man holds a wolf by the ears : but for fear of turning upon me and pulling out my throat, I would let her go to the devil.

HORTENSIO : I hear she claims marriage of thee.

FLAMINEO : Faith, I made to her some such dark promise ; and, in seeking to fly from 't, I run on, like a frighted dog with a bottle at 's tail, that fain would bite it off, and yet dares not look behind him.—Now, my precious gipsy.

ZANCHE : Aye, your love to me rather cools than heats.

FLAMINEO : Marry, I am the sounder lover : we have many wenches about the town heat too fast.

HORTENSIO : What do you think of these perfumed gallants, then ?

FLAMINEO : Their satin cannot save them ; I am confident
They have a certain spice of the disease ;
For they that sleep with dogs shall rise with fleas.

ZANCHE : Believe it ! A little painting and gay clothes
Make you loathe me.

FLAMINEO : How ? love a lady for painting or gay apparel ? I'll unkennel one example more for thee. Æsop had a foolish dog that let go the flesh to catch the shadow : I would have courtiers be better divers.

ZANCHE : You remember your oaths ?

FLAMINEO : Lovers' oaths are like mariners' prayers, uttered in extremity ; but when the tempest is o'er, and that the vessel leaves tumbling, they fall from protesting to drinking. And yet, amongst gentlemen, protesting and drinking go together, and agree as well as shoemakers and Westphalia bacon. They are both drawers on ; for drink draws on protestation and protestation draws on more drink. Is not this discourse better now than the morality of your sunburnt gentleman ?

Re-enter CORNELIA.

CORNELIA : Is this your perch, you haggard ? fly to the stews.
[*Striking* ZANCHE.

FLAMINEO : You should be clapt by the heels now :
Strike i' the court ! [*Exit* CORNELIA.

ZANCHE : She's good for nothing, but to make her maids
Catch cold a-nights : they dare not use a bed-staff
For fear of her light fingers.

MARCELLO : You're a strumpet,
An impudent one. [*Kicking* ZANCHE.

FLAMINEO : Why do you kick her ? say ;
Do you think that she's like a walnut-tree ?
Must she be cudgelled ere she bear good fruit ?

MARCELLO : She brags that you shall marry her.

FLAMINEO : What then ?

MARCELLO : I had rather she were pitched upon a stake
In some new-seeded garden, to affright
Her fellow crows thence.

FLAMINEO : You're a boy, a fool :
Be guardian to your hound ; I am of age.
MARCELLO : If I take her near you, I'll cut her throat.
FLAMINEO : With a fan of feathers ?
MARCELLO : And, for you, I'll whip
This folly from you.
FLAMINEO : Are you choleric ?
I'll purge 't with rhubarb. [*Threatens to strike him.*
HORTENSIO : Oh ! your brother ?
FLAMINEO : Hang him !
He wrongs me most that ought to offend me least.—
I do suspect my mother played foul play
When she conceived thee.
MARCELLO : Now, by all my hopes,
Like the two slaughtered sons of Œdipus,
The very flames of our affection
Shall turn two ways. Those words I'll make thee answer.
With thy heart-blood.
FLAMINEO : Do, like the geese in the progress :
You know where you shall find me.
MARCELLO : Very good. [*Exit* FLAMINEO.
An thou be'st a noble, friend, bear him my sword,
And bid him fit the length on 't.
YOUNG LORD : Sir, I shall.
[*Exeunt all but* ZANCHE.
ZANCHE : He comes. Hence petty thoughts of my disgrace !

Re-enter FRANCISCO.

I ne'er loved my complexion till now,
'Cause I may boldly say, without a blush,
I love you.
FRANCISCO : Your love is untimely sown ; there's a spring at Michaelmas, but 'tis but a faint one : I am sunk in years, and I have vowed never to marry.
ZANCHE : Alas ! poor maids get more lovers than husbands. Yet you may mistake my wealth. For, as when ambassadors are sent to congratulate princes, there's commonly sent along with them a rich present, so that, though the prince like not the ambassador's person nor words, yet he likes well of the presentment ; so I may come to you in the same manner, and be better loved for my dowry than my virtue.
FRANCISCO : I'll think on the motion.
ZANCHE : Do : I'll now
Detain you no longer. At your better leisure
I'll tell you things shall startle your blood :
Nor blame me that this passion I reveal ;
Lovers die inward that their flames conceal. [*Exit.*
FRANCISCO : Of all intelligence this may prove the best :
Sure, I shall draw strange fowl from this foul nest. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the same.*

Enter MARCELLO *and* CORNELIA.

CORNELIA : I hear a whispering all about the court

You are to fight : who is your opposite ?
What is the quarrel ?

MARCELLO : 'Tis an idle rumour.

CORNELIA : Will you dissemble ? sure, you do not well
To fright me thus : you never look thus pale
But when you are most angry. I do charge you
Upon my blessing,—nay, I'll call the duke,
And he shall school you.

MARCELLO : Publish not a fear
Which would convert to laughter : 'tis not so.
Was not this crucifix my father's ?

CORNELIA : Yes.

MARCELLO : I have heard you say, giving my brother suck,
He took the crucifix between his hands,
And broke a limb off.

CORNELIA : Yes ; but 'tis mended.

Enter FLAMINEO.

FLAMINEO : I have brought your weapon back.
[*Runs* MARCELLO *through.*

CORNELIA : Ha ! Oh, my horror !

MARCELLO : You have brought it home, indeed.

CORNELIA : Help ! Oh, he's murdered !

FLAMINEO : Do you turn your gall up ? I'll to sanctuary.
And send a surgeon to you. [*Exit.*

Enter HORTENSIO.

HORTENSIO : How ? o' th' ground ?

MARCELLO : O mother, now remember what I told
Of breaking of the crucifix ! Farewell.
There are some sins which Heaven doth duly punish
In a whole family. This it is to rise
By all dishonest means ! Let all men know,
That tree shall long time keep a steady foot
Whose branches spread no wider than the root. [*Dies.*

CORNELIA : Oh !
My perpetual sorrow !

HORTENSIO : Virtuous Marcello !
He's dead.—Pray, leave him, lady : come, you shall.

CORNELIA : Alas ! he is not dead ; he's in a trance. Why, here's nobody shall get anything by his death. Let me call him again, for God's sake !

HORTENSIO : I would you were deceived.

CORNELIA : Oh, you abuse me, you abuse me, you abuse me ! How many have gone away thus, for lack of tendance ! Rear up 's head, rear up 's head : his bleeding inward will kill him.

HORTENSIO : You see he is departed.

CORNELIA : Let me come to him ; give me him as he is : if he be turned to earth, let me but give him one hearty kiss, and you shall put us both into one coffin. Fetch a looking-glass : see if his breath will not stain it : or pull out some feathers from my pillow, and lay them to his lips. Will you lose him for a little painstaking ?

HORTENSIO : Your kindest office is to pray for him.
CORNELIA : Alas ! I would not pray for him yet He may live to lay me i' the ground, and pray for me, if you'll let me come to him.

Enter BRACHIANO *all armed save the beaver, with* FLAMINEO, FRANCISCO, LODOVICO, *and* PAGE *carrying the beaver.*

BRACHIANO : Was this your handiwork ?
FLAMINEO : It was my misfortune.
CORNELIA : He lies, he lies ; he did not kill him : these have killed him that would not let him be better looked to.
BRACHIANO : Have comfort, my grieved mother.
CORNELIA : Oh, you screech-owl !
HORTENSIO : Forbear, good madam.
CORNELIA : Let me go, let me go.
[*She runs to* FLAMINEO *with her knife drawn, and, coming to him, lets it fall.*
The God of Heaven forgive thee ! Dost not wonder
I pray for thee ? I'll tell thee what's the reason :
I have scarce breath to number twenty minutes ;
I'd not spend that in cursing. Fare thee well :
Half of thyself lies there ; and mayst thou live
To fill an hour-glass with his mouldered ashes,
To tell how thou shouldst spend the time to come
In blest repentance !
BRACHIANO : Mother, pray tell me
How came he by his death ? what was the quarrel ?
CORNELIA : Indeed, my younger boy presumed too much
Upon his manhood, gave him bitter words,
Drew his sword first ; and so, I know not how,
For I was out of my wits, he fell with 's head
Just in my bosom.
PAGE : This is not true, madam.
CORNELIA : I pray thee, peace.
One arrow 's grassed already : it were vain
T' lose this for that will ne'er be found again.
BRACHIANO : Go, bear the body to Cornelia's lodging :
And we command that none acquaint our duchess
With this sad accident. For you, Flamineo,
Hark you, I will not grant your pardon.
FLAMINEO : No ?
BRACHIANO : Only a lease of your life ; and that shall last
But for one day : thou shalt be forced each evening
To renew it, or be hang'd.
FLAMINEO : At your pleasure.
[LODOVICO *sprinkles* BRACHIANO'S *beaver with a poison.*
Your will is law now, I'll not meddle with it.
BRACHIANO : You once did brave me in your sister's lodging ;
I'll now keep you in awe for 't.—Where's our beaver ?
FRANCISCO (*aside*) : He calls for his destruction.—Noble youth,
I pity thy sad fate !—Now to the barriers.
This shall his passage to the black lake further :
The last good deed he did, he pardoned murther. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Lists at Padua.*

Charges and shouts. They fight at barriers ; first single pairs, then three to three.

Enter BRACHIANO, FRANCISCO, *and* FLAMINEO, *with others.*

BRACHIANO : An armourer ! ud's death, an armourer !
FLAMINEO : Armourer ! where's the armourer ?
BRACHIANO : Tear off my beaver.
FLAMINEO : Are you hurt, my lord ?

Enter ARMOURER.

BRACHIANO : Oh, my brain's on fire ! the helmet is poison'd.
ARMOURER : My lord,
Upon my soul,—
BRACHIANO : Away with him to torture !
There are some great ones that have hand in this.
And near about me.

Enter VITTORIA.

VITTORIA : Oh, my loved lord ! poisoned ?
FLAMINEO : Remove the bar. Here's unfortunate revels !
Call the physicians.

Enter two PHYSICIANS.

A plague upon you !
We have too much of your cunning here already :
I fear the ambassadors are likewise poisoned.
BRACHIANO : Oh, I am gone already ! the infection
Flies to the brain and heart. O thou strong heart !
There's such a covenant 'tween the world and it,
They're loth to break.

[*Enter* GIOVANNI.

GIOVANNI : O my most loved father !
BRACHIANO : Remove the boy away.—
Where's this good woman ?—Had I infinite worlds,
They were too little for thee : must I leave thee ?—
What say you, screech-owls, is the venom mortal ?
FIRST PHYSICIAN : Most deadly.
BRACHIANO : Most corrupted politic hangman,
You kill without book ; but your art to save
Fails you as oft as great men's needy friends.
I that have given life to offending slaves
And wretched murderers, have I not power
To lengthen mine own a twelvemonth ?—
Do not kiss me, for I shall poison thee.
This unction's sent from the great Duke of Florence.
FRANCISCO : Sir, be of comfort.
BRACHIANO : O thou soft natural death, that art joint-twin
To sweetest slumber ! no rough-bearded comet
Stares on thy mild departure ; the dull owl
Beats not against thy casement ; the hoarse wolf
Scents not thy carrion : pity winds thy corse,
Whilst horror waits on princes.

VITTORIA : I am lost for ever.
BRACHIANO : How miserable a thing it is to die
'Mongst women howling !

Enter LODOVICO *and* GASPARO, *in the habit of Capuchins.*

What are those ?
FLAMINEO : Franciscans :
They have brought the extreme unction.
BRACHIANO : On pain of death, let no man name death to me :
It is a word infinitely terrible.
Withdraw into our cabinet.

[*Exeunt all but* FRANCISCO *and* FLAMINEO, BRACHIANO *being carried out.*

FLAMINEO : To see what solitariness is about dying princes ! as heretofore they have unpeopled towns, divorced friends, and made great houses unhospitable, so now, O justice ! where are their flatterers now ? Flatterers are but the shadows of princes' bodies ; the least thick cloud makes them invisible.
FRANCISCO : There's great moan made for him.
FLAMINEO : Faith, for some few hours salt water will run most plentifully in every office o' the court : but, believe it, most of them do but weep as over their stepmothers' graves.
FRANCISCO : How mean you ?
FLAMINEO : Why, they dissemble ; as some men do that live within compass o' the verge.
FRANCISCO : Come, you have thrived well under him.
FLAMINEO : Faith, like a wolf in a woman's breast ; I have been fed with poultry : but, for money, understand me, I had as good a will to cozen him as e'er an officer of them all ; but I had not cunning enough to do it.
FRANCISCO : What didst thou think of him ? faith, speak freely.
FLAMINEO : He was a kind of statesman that would sooner have reckoned how many cannon-bullets he had discharged against a town, to count his expense that way, than how many of his valiant and deserving subjects he lost before it.
FRANCISCO : Oh, speak well of the duke.
FLAMINEO : I have done. Wilt hear some of my court-wisdom ? To reprehend princes is dangerous ; and to over-commend some of them is palpable lying.

Re-enter LODOVICO.

FRANCISCO : How is it with the duke ?
LODOVICO : Most deadly ill.
He's fall'n into a strange distraction :
He talks of battle and monopolies,
Levying of taxes ; and from that descends
To the most brain-sick language. His mind fastens
On twenty several objects, which confound
Deep sense with folly. Such a fearful end
May teach some men that bear too lofty crest,
Though they live happiest, yet they die not best.
He hath conferred the whole state of the dukedom
Upon your sister, till the prince arrive
At mature age.

FLAMINEO : There's some good luck in that yet.
FRANCISCO : See, here he comes.

Enter BRACHIANO, *presented in a bed*, VITTORIA, GASPARO, *and others.*

There's death in 's face already.
VITTORIA : O my good lord !
BRACHIANO : Away ! you have abused me :
[*These speeches are several kinds of distractions, and in the actions should appear so.*
You have conveyed coin forth our territories,
Bought and sold offices, oppressed the poor,
And I ne'er dreamt on 't. Make up your accounts :
I'll now be mine own steward.
FLAMINEO : Sir, have patience.
BRACHIANO : Indeed, I am to blame :
For did you ever hear the dusky raven
Chide blackness ? or was 't ever known the devil
Railed against cloven creatures ?
VITTORIA : O my lord !
BRACHIANO : Let me have some quails to supper.
FLAMINEO : Sir, you shall.
BRACHIANO : No, some fried dog-fish ; your quails feed on poison.
That old dog-fox, that politician, Florence !
I'll forswear hunting, and turn dog-killer :
Rare ! I'll be friends with him ; for, mark you, sir,
One dog still sets another a-barking. Peace,
Peace ! yonder's a fine slave come in now.
FLAMINEO : Where ?
BRACHIANO : Why, there, in a blue bonnet, and a pair
Of breeches with a great cod-piece : ha, ha, ha !
Look you, his cod-piece is stuck full of pins,
With pearls o' the head of them. Do not you know him ?
FLAMINEO : No, my lord.
BRACHIANO : Why, 'tis the devil ;
I know him by a great rose he wears on 's shoe
To hide his cloven foot. I'll dispute with him ;
He's a rare linguist.
VITTORIA : My lord, here's nothing.
BRACHIANO : Nothing ? rare ! nothing ! when I want money,
Our treasury is empty, there is nothing :
I'll not be used thus.
VITTORIA : Oh, lie still, my lord !
BRACHIANO : See, see Flamineo, that killed his brother,
Is dancing on the ropes there, and he carries
A money-bag in each hand, to keep him even,
For fear of breaking 's neck. And there's a lawyer
In a gown whipt with velvet, stares and gapes
When the money will fall. How the rogue cuts capers !
It should have been in a halter. 'Tis there : what's she ?
FLAMINEO : Vittoria, my lord.
BRACHIANO : Ha, ha, ha ! her hair
Is sprinkled with arras-powder, that makes her look
As if she had sinned in the pastry.—What's he ?

FLAMINEO : A divine, my lord.

[BRACHIANO *seems here near his end :* LODOVICO *and* GASPARO, *in the habit of Capuchins, present him in his bed with a crucifix and hallowed candle.*

BRACHIANO : He will be drunk ; avoid him :
T' argument is fearful, when churchmen stagger in 't.
Look you, six grey rats, that have lost their tails,
Crawl up the pillow : send for a rat-catcher :
I'll do a miracle, I'll free the court
From all foul vermin. Where's Flamineo ?

FLAMINEO (*aside*) : I do not like that he names me so often,
Especially on 's death-bed : 'tis sign
I shall not live long.—See, he's near his end.

LODOVICO : Pray, give us leave.—Attende, domine Brachiane.

FLAMINEO : See, see how firmly he doth fix his eye
Upon the crucifix.

VITTORIA : Oh, hold it constant !
It settles his wild spirits ; and so his eyes
Melt into tears.

LODOVICO : Domine Brachiane, solebas in bello tutus esse tuo clypeo ; nunc hunc clypeum hosti tuo opponas infernali.
[*By the crucifix.*

GASPARO : Olim hasta valuisti in bello ; nunc hanc sacram hastam vibrabis contra hostem animarum. [*By the hallowed taper.*

LODOVICO : Attende, domine Brachiane ; si nunc quoque probas ea quae acta sunt inter nos, flecte caput in dextrum.

GASPARO : Esto securus, domine Brachiane ; cogita quantum habeas meritorum ; denique memineris meam animam pro tua oppignoratam si quid esset periculi.

LODOVICO : Si nunc quoque probas ea quae acta sunt inter nos, flecte caput in leavum.—
He is departing : pray, stand all apart,
And let us only whisper in his ears
Some private meditations, which our order
Permits you not to hear.
[*Here, the rest being departed,* LODOVICO *and* GASPARO *discover themselves.*

GASPARO : Brachiano,—

LODOVICO : Devil,
Brachiano, thou art damned.

GASPARO : Perpetually.

LODOVICO : A slave condemned and given up to the gallows
Is thy great lord and master.

GASPARO : True ; for thou
Art given up to the devil.

LODOVICO : O you slave !
You that were held the famous politician,
Whose art was poison—

GASPARO : And whose conscience, murder !

LODOVICO : That would have broke your wife's neck down the stairs,
Ere she was poisoned !

GASPARO : That had your villainous salads—
LODOVICO : And fine embroidered bottles and perfumes,
Equally mortal with a winter-plague !
GASPARO : Now there's mercury—
LODOVICO : And copperas—
GASPARO : And quicksilver—
LODOVICO : With other devilish pothecary stuff,
A-melting in your politic brains : dost hear ?
GASPARO : This is Count Lodovico.
LODOVICO : This, Gasparo :
And thou shalt die like a poor rogue.
GASPARO : And stink
Like a dead fly-blown dog.
LODOVICO : And be forgotten
Before thy funeral sermon.
BRACHIANO : Vittoria ! Vittoria !
LODOVICO : Oh, the cursèd devil
Comes to himself again ! we are undone,
GASPARO : Strangle him in private.

Enter VITTORIA *and* ATTENDANTS.

What, will you call him again
To live in treble torments ? for charity,
For Christian charity, avoid the chamber.
[*Exeunt* VITTORIA *and* ATTENDANTS.
LODOVICO : You would prate, sir ? This is a true-love-knot
Sent from the Duke of Florence.
[BRACHIANO *is strangled.*
GASPARO : What, is it done ?
LODOVICO : The snuff is out. No woman-keeper i' th' world,
Though she had practised seven year at the pest-house,
Could have done 't quaintlier.

Re-enter VITTORIA, FRANCISCO, FLAMINEO, *and* ATTENDANTS.

My lords, he's dead.
OMNES : Rest to his soul.
VITTORIA : O me ! this place is hell. [*Exit.*
FRANCISCO : How heavily she takes it !
FLAMINEO : Oh, yes, yes ;
Had women navigable rivers in their eyes,
They would dispend them all : surely, I wonder
Why we should wish more rivers to the city,
When they sell water so good cheap. I'll tell thee,
These are but moonish shades of griefs or fears ;
There's nothing sooner dry than women's tears.
Why, here's an end of all my harvest ; he has given me
nothing.
Court-promises ! let wise men count them cursed,
For while you live, he that scores best pays worst.
FRANCISCO : Sure, this was Florence' doing.
FLAMINEO : Very likely.
Those are found weighty strokes which come from th' hand,
But those are killing strokes which come from th' head.

Oh, the rare tricks of a Machiavellian !
He doth not come, like a gross plodding slave,
And buffet you to death : no, my quaint knave,
He tickles you to death, makes you die laughing,
As if you had swallowed down a pound of saffron.
You see the feat, 'tis practised in a trice ;
To teach court-honesty, it jumps on ice.

FRANCISCO : Now have the people liberty to talk,
And descant on his vices.

FLAMINEO : Misery of princes,
That must of force be censured by their slaves !
Not only blamed for doing things are ill,
But for not doing all that all men will :
One were better be a thresher.—Ud's death,
I would fain speak with this duke yet.

FRANCISCO : Now he's dead :

FLAMINEO : I cannot conjure ; but if prayers or oaths
Will get to the speech of him, though forty devils
Wait on him in his livery of flames,
I'll speak to him, and shake him by the hand,
Though I be blasted. [*Exit.*

FRANCISCO : Excellent Lodovico ?
What, did you terrify him at the last gasp ?

LODOVICO : Yes, and so idly, that the duke had like
To have terrified us.

FRANCISCO : How ?

LODOVICO : You shall hear that hereafter.

Enter ZANCHE.

See, yon's the infernal that would make up sport.
Now to the revelation of that secret
She promised when she fell in love with you.

FRANCISCO : You're passionately met in this sad world.

ZANCHE : I would have you look up, sir ; these court-tears
Claim not your tribute to them : let those weep
That guiltily partake in the sad cause.
I knew last night, by a sad dream I had,
Some mischief would ensue ; yet, to say truth,
My dream most concerned you.

LODOVICO (*aside to* FRANCISCO) : Shall 's fall a-dreaming ?

FRANCISCO : Yes ; and for fashion sake I'll dream with her.

ZANCHE : Methought, sir, you came stealing to my bed.

FRANCISCO : Wilt thou believe me, sweeting ? by this light,
I was a-dreamt on thee too ; for methought
I saw thee naked.

ZANCHE : Fie, sir ! As I told you,
Methought you lay down by me.

FRANCISCO : So dreamt I ;
And lest thou shouldst take cold, I covered thee
With this Irish mantle.

ZANCHE : Verily, I did dream
You were somewhat bold with me : but to come to 't—

LODOVICO (*aside*) : How, how ! I hope you will not go to 't here.

FRANCISCO : Nay, you must hear my dream out.
ZANCHE : Well, sir, forth !
FRANCISCO : When I threw the mantle o'er thee, thou didst laugh
Exceedingly, methought.
ZANCHE : Laugh ?
FRANCISCO : And cried'st out,
The hair did tickle thee.
ZANCHE : There was a dream indeed !
LODOVICO (*aside*) : Mark her, I prithee ; she simpers like the suds
A collier hath been washed in.
ZANCHE : Come, sir, good fortune tends you. I did tell you
I would reveal a secret : Isabella,
The Duke of Florence' sister, was impoisoned
By a fumed picture ; and Camillo's neck
Was broke by damned Flamineo, the mischance
Laid on a vaulting-horse.
FRANCISCO : Most strange !
ZANCHE : Most true.
LODOVICO (*aside*) : The bed of snakes is broke.
ZANCHE : I sadly do confess I had a hand
In the black deed.
FRANCISCO : Thou kept'st their counsel ?
ZANCHE : Right ;
For which, urged with contrition, I intend
This night to rob Vittoria.
LODOVICO (*aside*) : Excellent penitence !
Usurers dream on't while they sleep out sermons.
ZANCHE : To further our escape, I have entreated
Leave to retire me, till the funeral,
Unto a friend i' the country : that excuse
Will further our escape. In coin and jewels
I shall at least make good unto your use
An hundred thousand crowns.
FRANCISCO : O noble wench !
LODOVICO : Those crowns we'll share.
ZANCHE : It is a dowry,
Methinks, should make that sun-burnt proverb false,
And wash the Æthiop white.
FRANCISCO : It shall. Away !
ZANCHE : Be ready for our flight.
FRANCISCO : An hour 'fore day. [*Exit* ZANCHE.
O strange discovery ! why, till now we knew not
The circumstance of either of their deaths.

Re-enter ZANCHE.

ZANCHE : You'll wait about midnight in the chapel ?
FRANCISCO : There. [*Exit* ZANCHE.
LODOVICO : Why, now our action's justified.
FRANCISCO : Tush for justice !
What harms it justice ? we now, like the partridge,
Purge the disease with laurel ; for the fame
Shall crown the enterprise, and quit the shame. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Room in the Palace at Padua.*

Enter FLAMINEO *and* GASPARO, *at one door; another way,* GIOVANNI, *attended.*

GASPARO : The young duke : did you e'er see a sweeter prince ?

FLAMINEO : I have known a poor woman's bastard better favoured ; this is behind him ; now, to his face, all comparisons were hateful. Wise was the courtly peacock that, being a great minion, and being compared for beauty by some dottrels that stood by to the kingly eagle, said the eagle was a far fairer bird than herself, not in respect of her feathers, but in respect of her long talons : his will grow out in time.—My gracious lord !

GIOVANNI : I pray, leave me, sir.

FLAMINEO : Your grace must be merry : 'tis I have cause to mourn ; for, wot you, what said the little boy that rode behind his father on horseback ?

GIOVANNI : Why, what said he ?

FLAMINEO : ' When you are dead, father,' said he, ' I hope then I shall ride in the saddle.' Oh, 'tis a brave thing for a man to sit by himself ! he may stretch himself in the stirrups, look about, and see the whole compass of the hemisphere. You're now, my lord, i' th' saddle.

GIOVANNI : Study your prayers, sir, and be penitent :
'Twere fit you'd think on what hath former bin ;
I have heard grief named the eldest child of sin. [*Exit.*

FLAMINEO : Study my prayers ! he threatens me divinely :
I am falling to pieces already. I care not, though, like Anacharsis, I were pounded to death in a mortar : and yet that death were fitter for usurers, gold and themselves to be beaten together, to make a most cordial cullis for the devil.
He hath his uncle's villainous look already,
In decimo sexto.

Enter COURTIER.

Now, sir, what are you ?

COURTIER : It is the pleasure, sir, of the young duke,
That you forbear the presence, and all rooms
That owe him reverence.

FLAMINEO : So, the wolf and the raven
Are very pretty fools when they are young.
Is it your office, sir, to keep me out ?

COURTIER : So the duke wills.

FLAMINEO : Verily, master courtier, extremity is not to be used in all offices : say that a gentlewoman were taken out of her bed about midnight, and committed to Castle Angelo, [or] to the tower yonder, with nothing about her but her smock, would it not show a cruel part in the gentleman-porter to lay claim to her upper garment, pull it o'er her head and ears, and put her in naked ?

COURTIER : Very good : you are merry. [*Exit.*

FLAMINEO : Doth he make a court-ejectment of me ? A flaming fire-brand casts more smoke without a chimney than within 't. I'll smoor some of them.

Enter FRANCISCO.

How now ! thou art sad.
FRANCISCO : I met even now with the most piteous sight.
FLAMINEO : Thou meet'st another here, a pitiful
Degraded courtier.
FRANCISCO : Your reverend mother
Is grown a very old woman in two hours.
I found them winding of Marcello's corse ;
And there is such a solemn melody,
'Tween doleful songs, tears, and sad elegies,—
Such as old grandams watching by the dead
Were wont to outwear the nights with,—that, believe me,
I had no eyes to guide me forth the room,
They were so o'ercharged with water.
FLAMINEO : I will see them.
FRANCISCO : 'Twere much uncharity in you ; for your sight
Will add unto their tears.
FLAMINEO : I will see them :
They are behind the traverse ; I'll discover
Their superstititious howling. [*Draws the curtain.*

CORNELIA, ZANCHE, *and three other* LADIES *discovered winding* MARCELLO'S *corse. A Song.*

CORNELIA : This rosemary is withered ; pray get fresh.
I would have these herbs grow up in his grave,
When I am dead and rotten. Reach the bays,
I'll tie a garland here about his head ;
'Twill keep my boy from lightning. This sheet
I have kept this twenty year, and every day
Hallowed it with my prayers : I did not think
He should have wore it.
ZANCHE : Look you who are yonder.
CORNELIA : Oh, reach me the flowers.
ZANCHE : Her ladyship's foolish.
LADY : Alas ! her grief
Hath turned her child again !
CORNELIA : You're very welcome :
There's rosemary for you ;—and rue for you ;—
[*To* FLAMINEO.
Heart's-ease for you ; I pray make much of it :
I have left more for myself.
FRANCISCO : Lady, who's this ?
CORNELIA : You are, I take it, the grave-maker.
FLAMINEO : So.
ZANCHE : 'Tis Flamineo.
CORNELIA : Will you make me such a fool ? here's a white hand :
Can blood so soon be washed out ? let me see ;
When screech-owls croak upon the chimney-tops,
And the strange cricket i' the oven sings and hops,
When yellow spots do on your hands appear,
Be certain then you of a corse shall hear.
Out upon 't, how 'tis speckled ! h'as handled a toad, sure.
Cowslip-water is good for the memory : pray, buy me three
ounces of 't.

FLAMINEO : I would I were from hence.
CORNELIA : Do you hear, sir ? I'll give you a saying which my grandmother was wont, when she heard the bell toll, to sing o'er unto her lute.
FLAMINEO : Do, an you will, do.
CORNELIA : ' Call for the robin-red-breast and the wren,
[CORNELIA *doth this in several forms of distraction.*
Since o'er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.
Call unto his funeral dole
The ant, the field-mouse, and the mole,
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,
And (when gay tombs are robbed) sustain no harm :
But keep the wolf far thence, that's foe to men,
For with his nails he'll dig them up again.'
They would not bury him 'cause he died in a quarrel ;
But I have an answer for them :
' Let holy Church receive him duly,
Since he paid the church-tithes truly.'
His wealth is summed, and this is all his store ;
This poor men get, and great men get no more.
Now the wares are gone, we may shut up shop.
Bless you all, good people.
[*Exeunt* CORNELIA, ZANCHE, *and* LADIES.
FLAMINEO : I have a strange thing in me, to the which
I cannot give a name, without it be
Compassion. I pray, leave me. [*Exit* FRANCISCO.
This night I'll know the utmost of my fate ;
I'll be resolved what my rich sister means
To assign me for my service. I have lived
Riotously ill, like some that live in court,
And sometimes when my face was full of smiles,
Have felt the maze of conscience in my breast.
Oft gay and honoured robes those tortures try :
We think caged birds sing, when indeed they cry.

[*Enter* BRACHIANO'S *ghost, in his leather cassock and breeches, boots and cowl ; in his hand a pot of lily-flowers, with a skull in it.*

Ha ! I can stand thee : nearer, nearer yet !
What a mockery hath death made of thee ! thou look'st sad.
In what place art thou ? in yon starry gallery ?
Or in the cursèd dungeon ?—No ? not speak ?
Pray, sir, resolve me, what religion's best
For a man to die in ? or is it in your knowledge
To answer me how long I have to live ?
That's the most necessary question.
Not answer ? are you still like some great men
That only walk like shadows up and down,
And to no purpose ? say :—
[*The Ghost throws earth upon him, and shows him the skull.*
What's that ? Oh, fatal ! he throws earth upon me !
A dead man's skull beneath the roots of flowers !—

I pray, speak, sir : our Italian churchmen
Make us believe dead men hold conference
With their familiars, and many times
Will come to bed to them, and eat with them.
[*Exit* GHOST.
He's gone ; and see, the skull and earth are vanished.
This is beyond melancholy. I do dare my fate
To do its worst. Now to my sister's lodging.
And sum up all these horrors : the disgrace
The prince threw on me ; next the piteous sight
Of my dead brother ; and my mother's dotage ;
And last this terrible vision : all these
Shall with Vittoria's bounty turn to good,
Or I will drown this weapon in her blood. [*Exit.*

SCENE V.—*A Street in Padua.*

Enter FRANCISCO *and* LODOVICO ; HORTENSIO *watching them.*

LODOVICO : My lord, upon my soul, you shall no further ;
You have most ridiculously engaged yourself
Too far already. For my part, I have paid
All my debts ; so, if I should chance to fall,
My creditors fall not with me ; and I vow
To quit all in this bold assembly
To the meanest follower. My lord, leave the city,
Or I'll forswear the murder. [*Exit.*
FRANCISCO : Farewell, Lodovico :
If thou dost perish in this glorious act,
I'll rear unto thy memory that fame
Shall in the ashes keep alive thy name. [*Exit.*
HORTENSIO : There's some black deed on foot.
I'll presently
Down to the citadel, and raise some force.
These strong court-factions, that do brook no checks,
In the career oft break the riders' necks. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.—*A Room in the Palace.*

Enter VITTORIA *with a book in her hand, and* ZANCHE ; FLAMINEO *following them.*

FLAMINEO : What, are you at your prayers ? give o'er.
VITTORIA : How, ruffian ?
FLAMINEO : I come to you 'bout worldly business :
Sit down, sit down :—nay, stay, blowze, you may hear it :—
The doors are fast enough.
VITTORIA : Ha ! are you drunk ?
FLAMINEO : Yes, yes, with wormwood-water : you shall taste
Some of it presently.
VITTORIA : What intends the Fury ?
FLAMINEO : You are my lord's executrix ; and I claim
Reward for my long service.
VITTORIA : For your service ?
FLAMINEO : Come, therefore, here is pen and ink ; set down
What you will give me.

VITTORIA (*writes*) : There.
FLAMINEO : Ha ! have you done already ?
'Tis a most short conveyance.
VITTORIA : I will read it :
' I give that portion to thee, and no other,
Which Cain groaned under, having slain his brother.'
FLAMINEO : A most courtly patent to beg by !
VITTORIA : You are a villain.
FLAMINEO : Is't come to this ? They say, affrights cure agues :
Thou hast a devil in thee ; I will try
If I can scare him from thee. Nay, sit still :
My lord hath left me yet two case of jewels
Shall make me scorn your bounty ; you shall see them. [*Exit.*
VITTORIA : Sure, he's distracted.
ZANCHE : Oh, he's desperate :
For your own safety give him gentle language.

Re-enter FLAMINEO *with two case of pistols.*

FLAMINEO : Look, these are better far at a dead lift
Than all your jewel-house.
VITTORIA : And yet, methinks,
These stones have no fair lustre, they are ill set.
FLAMINEO : I'll turn the right side towards you : you shall see
How they will sparkle.
VITTORIA : Turn this horror from me !
What do you want ? what would you have me do ?
Is not all mine yours ? have I any children ?
FLAMINEO : Pray thee, good woman, do not trouble me
With this vain worldly business ; say your prayers :
I made a vow to my deceasèd lord,
Neither yourself nor I should outlive him
The numbering of four hours.
VITTORIA : Did he enjoin it ?
FLAMINEO : He did ; and 'twas a deadly jealousy,
Lest any should enjoy thee after him,
That urged him vow me to it. For my death,
I did propound it voluntarily, knowing,
If he could not be safe in his own court,
Being a great duke, what hope, then, for us ?
VITTORIA : This is your melancholy and despair
FLAMINEO : Away !
Fool [that] thou art to think that politicians
Do use to kill the effects of injuries
And let the cause live. Shall we groan in irons,
Or be a shameful and a weighty burden
To a public scaffold ? This is my resolve ;
I would not live at any man's entreaty,
Nor die at any's bidding.
VITTORIA : Will you hear me ?
FLAMINEO : My life hath done service to other men ;
My death shall serve mine own turn. Make you ready,
VITTORIA : Do you mean to die indeed ?
FLAMINEO : With as much pleasure
As e'er my father gat me.

VITTORIA : Are the doors locked ?
ZANCHE : Yes, madam.
VITTORIA : Are you grown an atheist ? will you turn your body,
Which is the goodly palace of the soul,
To the soul's slaughter-house ? Oh, the cursèd devil,
—Which doth present us with all other sins
Thrice-candied o'er, despair with gall and stibium ;
Yet we carouse it off ;—(*Aside to* ZANCHE.) Cry out for help !—
Makes us forsake that which was made for man,
The world, to sink to that was made for devils,
Eternal darkness !
ZANCHE : Help ! help !
FLAMINEO : I'll stop your throat
With winter-plums.
VITTORIA : I prithee, yet remember,
Millions are now in graves, which at last day
Like mandrakes shall rise shrieking.
FLAMINEO : Leave your prating,
For these are but grammatical laments,
Feminine arguments : and they move me,
As some in pulpits move their auditory,
More with their exclamation than sense
Of reason or sound doctrine.
ZANCHE (*aside to* VITTORIA) : Gentle madam,
Seem to consent, only persuade him teach
The way to death ; let him die first.
VITTORIA : 'Tis good.
I apprehend it.
—To kill one's self is meat that we must take
Like pills, not chew 't, but quickly swallow it ;
The smart o' the wound, or weakness of the hand,
May else bring treble torments.
FLAMINEO : I have held it
A wretched and most miserable life
Which is not able to die.
VITTORIA : O, but frailty !
Yet I am now resolved : farewell, affliction !
Behold, Brachiano, I that while you lived
Did make a flaming altar of my heart
To sacrifice unto you, now am ready
To sacrifice heart and all.—Farewell, Zanche !
ZANCHE : How, madam ! do you think that I'll outlive you ;
Especially when my best self, Flamineo,
Goes the same voyage ?
FLAMINEO : O, most loved Moor !
ZANCHE : Only by all my love let me entreat you,—
Since it is most necessary one of us
Do violence on ourselves,—let you or I
Be her sad taster, teach her how to die.
FLAMINEO : Thou dost instruct me nobly : take these pistols,
Because my hands is stained with blood already :
Two of these you shall level at my breast,
The other 'gainst your own, and so we'll die

Most equally contented : but first swear
Not to outlive me.

VITTORIA AND ZANCHE : Most religiously.

FLAMINEO : Then here 's an end of me ; farewell, daylight !
And, O contemptible physic, that dost take
So long a study, only to preserve
So short a life, I take my leave of thee !—
These are two cupping-glasses that shall draw
[*Showing the pistols.*
All my infected blood out. Are you ready ?

VITTORIA AND ZANCHE : Ready.

FLAMINEO : Whither shall I go now ? O Lucian, thy ridiculous purgatory ! to find Alexander the Great cobbling shoes, Pompey tagging points, and Julius Cæsar making hair-buttons ! Hannibal selling blacking. and Augustus crying garlic ! Charlemagne selling lists by the dozen, and King Pepin crying apples in a cart drawn with one horse ! Whether I resolve to fire, earth, water, air,
Or all the elements by scruples, I know not,
Nor greatly care.—Shoot, shoot :
Of all deaths the violent death is best ;
For from ourselves it steals ourselves so fast,
The pain, once apprehended, is quite past.
[*They shoot : he falls ; and they run to him, and tread upon him.*

VITTORIA : What, are you dropt ?

FLAMINEO : I am mixed with earth already : as you are noble,
Perform your vows, and bravely follow me.

VITTORIA : Whither ? to hell ?

ZANCHE : To most assured damnation ?

VITTORIA : O thou most cursèd devil !

ZANCHE : Thou art caught—

VITTORIA : In thine own engine. I tread the fire out
That would have been my ruin.

FLAMINEO : Will you be perjured ? what a religious oath was Styx, that the gods never durst swear by, and violate ! Oh, that we had such an oath to minister, and to be so well kept in our courts of justice !

VITTORIA : Think whither thou art going.

ZANCHE : And remember
What villainies thou hast acted.

VITTORIA : This thy death
Shall make me like a blazing ominous star :
Look up and tremble.

FLAMINEO : O, I am caught with a springe !

VITTORIA : You see the fox comes many times short home ;
'Tis here proved true.

FLAMINEO : Killed with a couple of braches !

VITTORIA : No fitter offering for the infernal Furies
Than one in whom they reigned while he was living.

FLAMINEO : Oh, the way's dark and horrid ! I cannot see :
Shall I have no company ?

VITTORIA : Oh, yes, thy sins
Do run before thee to fetch fire from hell,
To light thee thither.

FLAMINEO : Oh, I smell soot,
Most stinking soot ! the chimney is a-fire :
My liver's parboiled, like Scotch holly-bread ;
There's a plumber laying pipes in my guts, it scalds.—
Wilt thou outlive me ?

ZANCHE : Yes, and drive a stake
Th[o]rough thy body ; for we'll give it out
Thou didst this violence upon thyself.

FLAMINEO : O cunning devils ! now I have tried your love,
And doubled all your reaches.—I am not wounded ; [*Rises.*
The pistols held no bullets ; 'twas a plot
To prove your kindness to me ; and I live
To punish your ingratitude. I knew,
One time or other, you would find a way
To give me a strong potion.—O men
That lie upon your death-beds, and are haunted
With howling wives, ne'er trust them ! they'll re-marry
Ere the worm pierce your winding-sheet, ere the spider
Make a thin curtain for your epitaphs.—
How cunning you were to discharge ! do you practise at the Artillery-yard ?—Trust a woman ? never, never ! Brachiano be my precedent. We lay our souls to pawn to the devil for a little pleasure, and a woman makes the bill of sale. That ever man should marry ! For one Hypermnestra that saved her lord and husband, forty-nine of her sisters cut their husbands' throats all in one night : there was a shoal of virtuous horse leeches !—Here are two other instruments.

VITTORIA : Help, help !

Enter LODOVICO, GASPARO, *and other* CONSPIRATORS.

FLAMINEO : What noise is that ? ha ! false keys i' the court !

LODOVICO : We have brought you a masque.

FLAMINEO : A matachin, it seems by your drawn swords.
Churchmen turned revellers !

CONSPIRATORS : Isabella ! Isabella !

LODOVICO : Do you know us now ?
[*They throw off their disguise.*

FLAMINEO : Lodovico ! and Gasparo !

LODOVICO : Yes ; and that Moor the duke gave pension to
Was the great Duke of Florence.

VITTORIA : Oh, we are lost !

FLAMINEO : You shall not take justice from forth my hands,—
Oh, let me kill her !—I'll cut my safety
Through your coats of steel. Fate's a spaniel,
We cannot beat it from us. What remains now ?
Let all that do ill, take this precedent,—
Man may his fate foresee, but not prevent :
And of all axioms this shall win the prize,—
'Tis better to be fortunate than wise.

GASPARO : Bind him to the pillar.

VITTORIA : Oh, your gentle pity !
I have seen a blackbird that would sooner fly
To a man's bosom, than to stay the gripe
Of the fierce sparrowhawk.
GASPARO : Your hope deceives you.

VITTORIA : If Florence be i' the court, would he would kill me !
GASPARO : Fool ! princes give rewards with their own hands,
But death or punishment by the hands of others.
LODOVICO : Sirrah, you once did strike me : [now] I'll strike you
Into the centre.

FLAMINEO : Thou'lt do it like a hangman,
A base hangman, not like a noble fellow ;
For thou see'st I cannot strike again.
LODOVICO : Dost laugh ?
FLAMINEO : Would'st have me die, as I was born, in whining ?
GASPARO : Recommend yourself to Heaven.

FLAMINEO : No, I will carry
Mine own commendations thither.
LODOVICO : Oh, could I kill you forty times a day,
And use 't four year together, 'twere too little !
Naught grieves but that you are too few to feed
The famine of our vengeance. What dost think on ?

FLAMINEO : Nothing ; of nothing : leave thy idle questions.
I am i' th' way to study a long silence :
To prate were idle. I remember nothing.
There's nothing of so infinite vexation
As man's own thoughts.

LODOVICO : O thou glorious strumpet !
Could I divide thy breath from this pure air
When 't leaves thy body, I would suck it up,
And breathe 't upon some dunghill.

VITTORIA : You, my death's-man !
Methinks thou dost not look horrid enough ;
Thou hast too good a face to be a hangman :
If thou be, do thy office in right form ;
Fall down upon thy knees, and ask forgiveness.
LODOVICO : Oh, thou hast been a most prodigious comet.
But I'll cut off your train,—kill the Moor first.
VITTORIA : You shall not kill her first ; behold my breast :
I will be waited on in death ; my servant
Shall never go before me.

GASPARO : Are you so brave ?
VITTORIA : Yes, I shall welcome death
As princes do some great ambassadors ;
I'll meet thy weapon half way.
LODOVICO : Thou dost tremble :
Methinks fear should dissolve thee into air.

VITTORIA : Oh, thou art deceived, I am too true a woman
Conceit can never kill me. I'll tell thee what,
I will not in my death shed one base tear ;
Or if look pale, for want of blood, not fear.
GASPARO : Thou art my task, black Fury.

ZANCHE : I have blood
As red as either of theirs : wilt drink some ?
'Tis good for the falling-sickness. I am proud
Death cannot alter my complexion,
For I shall ne'er look pale.

LODOVICO : Strike, strike,
With a joint motion !

[*They stab* VITTORIA, ZANCHE, *and* FLAMINEO.

VITTORIA : 'Twas a manly blow !
The next thou giv'st, murder some sucking infant ;
And then thou wilt be famous.

FLAMINEO : Oh, what blade is 't ?
[Is 't] a Toledo, or an English fox ?
I ever thought a cutler should distinguish
The cause of my death, rather than a doctor.
Search my wound deeper ; tent it with the steel
That made it.

VITTORIA : Oh, my greatest sin lay in my blood ;
Now my blood pays for 't.

FLAMINEO : Thou 'rt a noble sister !
I love thee now : if woman do breed man,
She ought to teach him manhood : fare thee well.
Know, many glorious women that are famed
For masculine virtue have been vicious,
Only a happier silence did betide them :
She hath no faults who hath the art to hide them.

VITTORIA : My soul, like to a ship in a black storm,
Is driven, I know not whither.

FLAMINEO : Then cast anchor.
Prosperity doth bewitch men, seeming clear ;
But seas do laugh, show white, when rocks are near.
We cease to grieve, cease to be fortune's slaves
Nay, cease to die, by dying. Art thou gone ?
And thou so near the bottom ? false report,
Which says that women vie with the nine Muses
For nine tough durable lives ! I do not look
Who went before, nor who shall follow me :
No, at myself I will begin and end.
While we look up to Heaven, we confound
Knowledge with knowledge. Oh, I am in a mist !

VITTORIA : Oh, happy they that never saw the court,
Nor ever knew great men but by report ! [*Dies.*

FLAMINEO : I recover like a spent taper, for a flash,
And instantly go out.
Let all that belong to great men remember th' old wives' tradition, to be like the lions i' th' Tower on Candlemas-day : to mourn if the sun shine, for fear of the pitiful remainder of winter to come.
'Tis well yet there's some goodness in my death ;
My life was a black charnel. I have caught
An everlasting cold ; I have lost my voice
Most irrecoverably. Farewell, glorious villains !

This busy trade of life appears most vain,
Since rest breeds rest, where all seek pain by pain.
Let no harsh flattering bells resound my knell ;
Strike, thunder, and strike loud, to my farewell ! [*Dies.*

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR (*within*) : This way, this way ! break ope the doors ! this way !

LODOVICO : Ha ! are we betrayed ?
Why, then let 's constantly die all together ;
And having finished this most noble deed,
Defy the worst of fate, not fear to bleed.

Enter AMBASSADORS *and* GIOVANNI.

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR : Keep back the prince : shoot, shoot.
[*They shoot, and* LODOVICO *falls.*

LODOVICO : Oh, I am wounded !
I fear I shall be ta'en.

GIOVANNI : You bloody villains,
By what authority have you committed
This massacre ?

LODOVICO : By thine.

GIOVANNI : Mine ?

LODOVICO : Yes ; thy uncle,
Which is a part of thee, enjoined us to 't :
Thou know'st me, I am sure ; I am Count Lodowick ;
And thy most noble uncle in disguise
Was last night in thy court.

GIOVANNI : Ha !

GASPARO : Yes, that Moor
Thy father chose his pensioner.

GIOVANNI : He turned murderer ?—
Away with them to prison and to torture !
All that have hands in this shall taste our justice,
As I ope Heaven.

LODOVICO : I do glory yet
That I can call this act mine own. For my part,
The rack, the gallows, and the torturing wheel,
Shall be but sound sleeps to me : here's my rest ;
I limned this night-piece, and it was my best.

GIOVANNI : Remove the bodies.—See, my honoured lord[s].
What use you ought make of their punishment :
Let guilty men remember, their black deeds
Do lean on crutches made of slender reeds. [*Exeunt.*

Before 1633

'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE

(By JOHN FORD)

John Ford (b. 1586), the author of this audacious play, seems to have been a level-headed lawyer of Grays Inn. The habit of reserve that distinguished him from the great habitués of the Mermaid :

> Deep in a dump John Ford was alone got
> With folded arms and melancholy hat

accords to perfection with our notion of a poet obsessed with the dark fate of unnatural lovers, but it is only fair to mention that the type is not at all uncommon among frequenters of luncheon counters in the purlieus of Chancery Lane. Ford was undoubtedly a man of singular temperament, like many commonplace characters.

His great plays, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *The Broken Heart*, and *Love's Sacrifice*, were all printed and apparently produced in the year 1633. An interesting historical play *Perkin Warbeck* followed in the succeeding year. One previous play, *The Lover's Melancholy*, (licensed in 1628) survives. This latter and *The Broken Heart*, were produced at the Blackfriars Theatre. The other plays were acted at the Phœnix in Drury Lane. These were "private theatres," roofed in, forerunners of the modern playhouse. The earlier open theatres on Bankside, where Shakespeare's plays were first produced, had gone out of fashion. Drama was becoming more exclusive, as the great dramatists gave out. The latest craze among both patrons and practitioners was the Court Masque, in which drama was made subsidiary to a scenic show. On the 2nd September, 1642, Parliament decreed "that while these sad causes and set-times of humiliation do continue, public stage-plays will cease and be forborne."

We do not know whether Ford lived to see that day.

'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE

Characters

Bonaventura, *a Friar*
A Cardinal, *Nuncio to the Pope*
Soranzo, *a Nobleman*
Florio, Donado, } *Citizens of Parma*
Grimaldi, *a Roman Gentleman*
Giovanni, *Son to* Florio
Bergetto, *Nephew to* Donado
Richardetto, *a supposed Physician*
Vasques, *Servant to* Soranzo
Poggio, *Servant to* Bergetto
Banditti
Annabella, *Daughter to* Florio
Hippolita, *Wife to* Richardetto
Philotis, *his Niece*
Putana, *Tutoress to* Annabella
Officers, Attendants, Servants, &c.

Scene : Parma.

ACT I

SCENE I.—Friar Bonaventura's *Cell*.

Enter Friar *and* Giovanni.

Friar : Dispute no more in this ; for know, young man,
These are no school points ; nice philosophy

May tolerate unlikely arguments,
But Heaven admits no jest : wits that presumed
On wit too much, by striving how to prove
There was no God, with foolish grounds of art,
Discover'd first the nearest way to hell ;
And fill'd the world with devilish atheism.
Such questions, youth, are fond : far better 'tis
To bless the sun, than reason why it shines ;
Yet He thou talk'st of, is above the sun.—
No more ! I may not hear it.

GIO. : Gentle father,
To you I have unclasp'd my burden'd soul,
Emptied the storehouse of my thoughts and heart,
Made myself poor of secrets ; have not left
Another word untold, which hath not spoke
All what I ever durst, or think, or know ;
And yet is here the comfort I shall have ?
Must I not do what all men else may,—love ?

FRIAR : Yes, you may love, fair son.

GIO. : Must I not praise
That beauty, which, if fram'd anew, the gods
Would make a god of, if they had it there ;
And kneel to it, as I do kneel to them ?

FRIAR : Why, foolish madman !—

GIO. : Shall a peevish sound,
A customary form, from man to man,
Of brother and of sister, be a bar
'Twixt my perpetual happiness and me ?
Say that we had one father, say one womb
(Curse to my joys !) gave both us life and birth ;
Are we not, therefore, each to other bound
So much the more by nature ? by the links
Of blood, of reason ? nay, if you will have it,
Even of religion, to be ever one,
One soul, one flesh, one love, one heart, one all ?

FRIAR : Have done, unhappy youth ! for thou art lost.

GIO. : Shall, then, for that I am her brother born,
My joys be ever banished from her bed ?
No, father ; in your eyes I see the change
Of pity and compassion ; from your age,
As from a sacred oracle, distils
The life of counsel : tell me, holy man,
What cure shall give me ease in these extremes ?

FRIAR : Repentance, son, and sorrow for this sin :
For thou hast mov'd a Majesty above,
With thy unranged (almost) blasphemy.

GIO. : O do not speak of that, dear confessor.

FRIAR : Art thou, my son, that miracle of wit,
Who once, within these three months, wert esteem'd
A wonder of thine age, throughout Bononia ?
How did the University applaud
Thy government, behaviour, learning, speech,
Sweetness, and all that could make up a man !

I was proud of my tutelage, and chose
Rather to leave my books, than part with thee ;
I did so :—but the fruits of all my hopes
Are lost in thee, as thou art in thyself.
O Giovanni ! hast thou left the schools
Of knowledge, to converse with lust and death ?
For death waits on thy lust. Look through the world,
And thou shalt see a thousand faces shine
More glorious than this idol thou ador'st :
Leave her, and take thy choice, 'tis much less sin ;
Though in such games as those, they lose that win.

GIO. : It were more ease to stop the ocean
From floats and ebbs, than to dissuade my vows.

FRIAR : Then I have done, and in thy wilful flames
Already see thy ruin ; Heaven is just.—
Yet hear my counsel.

GIO. : As a voice of life.

FRIAR : Hie to thy father's house, there lock thee fast
Alone within thy chamber ; then fall down
On both thy knees, and grovel on the ground ;
Cry to thy heart ; wash every word thou utter'st
In tears (and if't be possible) of blood :
Beg Heaven to cleanse the leprosy of lust
That rots thy soul ; acknowledge what thou art,
A wretch, a worm, a nothing ; weep, sigh, pray
Three times a-day, and three times every night :
For seven days space do this ; then, if thou find'st
No change in thy desires, return to me ;
I'll think on remedy. Pray for thyself
At home, whilst I pray for thee here.—Away !
My blessing with thee ! we have need to pray.

GIO. : All this I'll do, to free me from the rod
Of vengeance ; else I'll swear my fate's my god.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Street, before* FLORIO'S *House.*

Enter GRIMALDI *and* VASQUES, *with their Swords drawn.*

VAS. : Come, sir, stand to you tackling ; if you prove craven, I'll make you run quickly.

GRIM. : Thou art no equal match for me.

VAS. : Indeed I never went to the wars to bring home news ; nor I cannot play the mountebank for a meal's meat, and swear I got my wounds in the field. See you these grey hairs ? they'll not flinch for a bloody nose. Wilt thou to this gear ?

GRIM. : Why, slave, think'st thou I'll balance my reputation with a cast-suit ? Call thy master, he shall know that I dare—

VAS. : Scold like a cot-quean ;—that's your profession. Thou poor shadow of a soldier, I will make thee know my master keeps servants, thy betters in quality and performance. Com'st thou to fight or prate ?

GRIM. : Neither, with thee. I am a Roman and a gentleman ; one that have got mine honour with expense of blood.

VAS. : You are a lying coward, and a fool. Fight, or by these hills I'll kill thee : —brave my lord ! You'll fight ?

GRIM. : Provoke me not, for if thou dost——
VAS. : Have at you. [*They fight,* GRIMALDI *is worsted.*

Enter FLORIO, DONADO, *and* SORANZO, *from opposite Sides.*

FLO. : What mean these sudden broils so near my doors?
Have you not other places, but my house,
To vent the spleen of your disorder'd bloods?
Must I be haunted still with such unrest,
As not to eat, or sleep in peace at home?
Is this your love, Grimaldi? Fie! 'tis naught.
DON. : And, Vasques, I may tell thee, 'tis not well.
To broach these quarrels; you are ever forward
In seconding contentions.

Enter above ANNABELLA *and* PUTANA.

FLO. : What's the ground?
SOR. : That, with your patience, signiors, I'll resolve:
This gentleman, whom fame reports a soldier,
(For else I know not) rivals me in love
To Signior Florio's daughter; to whose ears
He still prefers his suit, to my disgrace;
Thinking the way to recommend himself,
Is to disparage me in his report.—
But know, Grimaldi, though, may be, thou art
My equal in thy blood, yet this bewrays
A lowness in thy mind; which, wert thou noble,
Thou would'st as much disdain, as I do thee
For this unworthiness; and on this ground
I will'd my servant to correct his tongue,
Holding a man so base no match for me.

VAS. : And had not your sudden coming prevented us, I had let my gentleman blood under the gills; I should have worm'd you, sir, for running mad.
GRIM. : I'll be reveng'd, Soranzo.
VAS. : On a dish of warm broth to stay your stomach—do, honest innocence, do! spoon-meat is a wholesomer diet than a Spanish blade.
GRIM. : Remember this! [*Exit.*
SOR. : I fear thee not, Grimaldi.
FLO. : My lord Soranzo, this is strange to me;
Why you should storm, having my word engaged:
Owing her heart, what need you doubt her ear?
Losers may talk, by law of any game.
VAS. : Yet the villainy of words, Signior Florio, may be such, as would make any unspleened dove choleric. Blame not my lord in this.
FLO. : Be you more silent;
I would not for my wealth, my daughter's love
Should cause the spilling of one drop of blood.
Vasques, put up: lets's end this fray in wine. [*Exeunt.*
PUT. : How like you this, child? here's threatening, challenging, quarrelling, and fighting, on every side, and all is for your sake; you had need look to yourself, charge, you'll be stolen away sleeping else shortly.
ANN. : But, tutoress, such a life gives no content
To me, my thoughts are fix'd on other ends.
Would you would leave me!

PUT. : Leave you ! no marvel else ; leave me no leaving, charge ; this is love outright. Indeed, I blame you not ; you have choice fit for the best lady in Italy.

ANN. : Pray do not talk so much.

PUT. : Take the worst with the best, there's Grimaldo the soldier, a very well-timber'd fellow. They say he's a Roman, nephew to the Duke Montferrato ; they say he did good service in the wars against the Milanese ; but, 'faith, charge, I do not like him, an't be for nothing but for being a soldier : not one amongst twenty of your skirmishing captains but have some privy maim or other, that mars their standing upright. I like him the worse, he crinkles so much in the hams ; though he might serve if there were no more men, yet he's not the man I would choose.

ANN. : Fie, how thou prat'st !

PUT. : As I am a very woman, I like Signior Soranzo well ; he is wise, and what is more, rich ; and what is more than that, kind ; and what is more than all this, a nobleman : such a one, were I the fair Annabella myself, I would wish and pray for. Then he is bountiful ; besides, he is handsome, and by my troth, I think, wholesome, and that's news in a gallant of three-and-twenty : liberal, that I know ; loving, that you know ; and a man sure, else he could never have purchased such a good name with Hippolita, the lusty widow, in her husband's lifetime. An 'twere but for that report, sweetheart, would he were thine ! Commend a man for his qualities, but take a husband as he is a plain, sufficient, naked man ; such a one is for your bed, and such a one is Signior Soranzo, my life for't.

ANN. : Sure the woman took her morning's draught too soon.

Enter BERGETTO *and* POGGIO.

PUT. : But look, sweetheart, look what thing comes now ! Here's another of your ciphers to fill up the number : Oh, brave old ape in a silken coat ! Observe.

BERG. : Didst thou think, Poggio, that I would spoil my new clothes, and leave my dinner, to fight !

POG. : No, sir, I did not take you for so arrant a baby.

BERG. : I am wiser than so : for I hope, Poggio, thou never heardst of an elder brother that was a coxcomb ; didst, Poggio ?

POG. : Never indeed, sir, as long as they had either land or money left them to inherit.

BERG. : Is it possible, Poggio ? Oh, monstrous ! Why, I'll undertake, with a handful of silver, to buy a headful of wit at any time : but, sirrah, I have another purchase in hand : I shall have the wench, mine uncle says. I will but wash my face, and shift socks ; and then have at her, i'faith.—Mark my pace, Poggio ! [*Passes over the stage.*

POG. : Sir,—I have seen an ass and a mule trot the Spanish pavin with a better grace, I know not how often. [*Aside, and following him.*

ANN. This idiot haunts me too.

PUT. : Ay, ay, he needs no description. The rich magnifico that is below with your father, charge, Signior Donado, his uncle, for that he means to make this, his cousin, a golden calf, thinks that you will be right Israelite, and fall down to him presently : but I hope I have tutored you better. They say a fool's bauble is a lady's play-fellow ; yet you, having wealth enough, you need not cast upon the dearth of flesh, at any rate. Hang him, innocent !

GIOVANNI *passes over the stage.*

ANN. : But see, Putana, see ! what blessed shape
Of some celestial creature now appears !—

What man is he, that with such sad aspéct
Walks careless of himself?
PUT. : Where?
ANN. : Look below.
PUT. : Oh, 'tis your brother, sweet.
ANN. : Ha!
PUT. 'Tis your brother.
ANN. : Sure 'tis not he; this is some woeful thing
Wrapp'd up in grief, some shadow of a man.
Alas! he beats his breast, and wipes his eyes,
Drown'd all in tears: methinks I hear him sigh;
Let's down, Putana, and partake the cause.
I know my brother, in the love he bears me,
Will not deny me partage in his sadness:
My soul is full of heaviness and fear. [*Aside, and exit with* PUT.

SCENE III.—*A Hall in* FLORIO'S *House.*

GIO. : Lost! I am lost! My fates have doom'd my death:
The more I strive, I love; the more I love,
The less I hope: I see my ruin certain.
What judgment or endeavours could apply
To my incurable and restless wounds,
I thoroughly have examined, but in vain.
O, that it were not in religion sin
To make our love a god, and worship it!
I have even wearied heaven with pray'rs, dried up
The springs of my continual tears, even starv'd
My veins with daily fasts: what wit or art
Could counsel, I have practised; but, alas!
I find all these but dreams, and old men's tales,
To fright unsteady youth; I am still the same:
Or I must speak, or burst. 'Tis not, I know,
My lust, but 'tis my fate, that leads me on.
Keep fear and low faint-hearted shame with slaves!
I'll tell her that I love her, though my heart
Were rated at the price of that attempt.
Oh me! she comes.

Enter ANNABELLA *and* PUTANA.

ANN. : Brother!
GIOV. : If such a thing
As courage dwell in men, ye heavenly powers,
Now double all that virtue in my tongue! [*Aside.*
ANN. : Why, brother,
Will you not speak to me?
GIOV. : Yes; how do you, sister?
ANN. : Howe'er I am, methinks you are not well.
PUT. : Bless us! why are you so sad, sir?
GIOV. : Let me entreat you, leave us a while,
Sister, I would be private with you. Putana.
ANN. : Withdraw, Putana.
PUT. : I will.—If this were any other company for her, I should think my absence an office of some credit; but I will leave them together.
[*Aside and exit.*

GIOV. : Come, sister, lend your hand ; let's walk together ;
I hope you need not blush to walk with me ;
Here's none but you and I.
ANN. : How's this ?
GIOV. : I'faith, I mean no harm.
ANN. : Harm ?
GIOV. : No, good faith.
How is it with thee ?
ANN. : I trust he be not frantic— [*Aside.*
I am very well, brother.
GIOV. : Trust me, but I am sick ; I fear so sick,
'Twill cost my life.
ANN. : Mercy forbid it ! 'tis not so, I hope.
GIOV. : I think you love me, sister.
ANN. : Yes, you know I do.
GIOV. : I know it, indeed—you are very fair.
ANN. : Nay, then I see you have a merry sickness.
GIOV. : That's as it proves. The poets feign, I read,
That Juno for her forehead did exceed
All other goddesses ; but I durst swear
Your forehead exceeds her's, as her's did theirs.
ANN. : 'Troth, this is pretty
GIOV. : Such a pair of stars
As are thine eyes, would, like Promethean fire,
If gently glanced, give life to senseless stones.
ANN. : Fie upon you !
GIOV. : The lily and the rose, most sweetly strange,
Upon your dimple cheeks do strive for change :
Such lips would tempt a saint : such hands as those
Would make an anchorite lascivious.
ANN. : Do you mock me, or flatter me ?
GIOV. : If you would see a beauty more exact
Than art can counterfeit, or nature frame,
Look in your glass, and there behold your own.
ANN. : O, you are a trim youth !
GIOV. : Here ! [*Offers his dagger to her.*
ANN. : What to do ?
GIOV. : And here's my breast ; strike home !
Rip up my bosom, there thou shalt behold
A heart, in which is writ the truth I speak—
Why stand you ?
ANN. : Are you earnest ?
GIOV. : Yes, most earnest.
You cannot love ?
ANN. : Whom ?
GIOV. : Me. My tortured soul
Hath felt affliction in the heat of death.
O, Annabella, I am quite undone !
The love of thee, my sister, and the view
Of thy immortal beauty have untuned
All harmony both of my rest and life.
Why do you not strike ?

ANN. : Forbid it, my just fears !
If this be true, 'twere fitter I were dead.
GIOV. : True ! Annabella ; 'tis no time to jest.
I have too long suppress'd my hidden flames,
That almost have consum'd me ; I have spent
Many a silent night in sighs and groans ;
Ran over all my thoughts, despised my fate,
Reason'd against the reasons of my love,
Done all that smooth-cheek'd virtue could advise,
But found all bootless : 'tis my destiny
That you must either love, or I must die.
ANN. : Comes this in sadness from you ?
GIOV. : Let some mischief
Befall me soon, if I dissemble aught.
ANN. : You are my brother Giovanni.
GIOV. : You
My sister Annabella ; I know this.
And could afford you instance why to love
So much the more for this ; to which intent
Wise nature first in your creation meant
To make you mine ; else't had been sin and foul
To share one beauty to a double soul.
Nearness in birth and blood, doth but persuade
A nearer nearness in affection.
I have ask'd counsel of the holy church,
Who tells me I may love you ; and, 'tis just,
That, since I may, I should ; and will, yes will :
Must I now live, or die ?
NN. : Live ; thou hast won
The field, and never fought : what thou hast urged,
My captive heart had long ago resolv'd.
I blush to tell thee,—but I'll tell thee now—
For every sigh that thou hast spent for me,
I have sigh'd ten ; for every tear, shed twenty :
And not so much for that I loved, as that
I durst not say I loved, nor scarcely think it.
IOV. : Let not this music be a dream, ye gods,
For pity's sake, I beg you !
NN. : On my knees, [*She kneels.*
Brother, even by our mother's dust, I charge you,
Do not betray me to your mirth or hate ;
Love me, or kill me, brother.
IOV. : On my knees, [*He kneels.*
Sister, even by my mother's dust I charge you,
Do not betray me to your mirth or hate ;
Love me, or kill me, sister.
NN. : You mean good sooth, then ?
IOV. : In good troth, I do ;
And so do you, I hope : say, I'm in earnest.
NN. : I'll swear it, I.
IOV. : And I ; and by this kiss, [*Kisses her.*
(Once more, yet once more ; now let's rise) (*they rise*) by this,
I would not change this minute for Elysium.
What must we now do ?

ANN. : What you will.
GIOV. : Come then ;
After so many tears as we have wept,
Let's learn to court in smiles, to kiss, and sleep. [*Exeun*

SCENE IV.—*A Street.*

Enter FLORIO *and* DONADO.

FLOR. : Signior Donado, you have said enough,
I understand you ; but would have you know,
I will not force my daughter 'gainst her will.
You see I have but two, a son and her ;
And he is so devoted to his book,
As I must tell you true, I doubt his health :
Should he miscarry, all my hopes rely
Upon my girl. As for worldly fortune,
I am, I thank my stars, bless'd with enough.
My care is, how to match her to her liking ;
I would not have her marry wealth, but love,
And if she like your nephew, let him have her ;
Here's all that I can say.
DON. : Sir, you say well,
Like a true father ; and, for my part, I,
If the young folks can like, ('twixt you and me)
Will promise to assure my nephew presently
Three thousand florins yearly, during life,
And, after I am dead, my whole estate.
FLO. : 'Tis a fair proffer, sir ; meantime your nephew
Shall have free passage to commence his suit :
If he can thrive, he shall have my consent ;
So for this time I'll leave you, Signior. [*Exi*
DON. : Well,
Here's hope yet, if my nephew would have wit ;
But he is such another dunce, I fear
He'll never win the wench. When I was young,
I could have don't, i'faith, and so shall he,
If he will learn of me ; and, in good time,
He comes himself.

Enter BERGETTO *and* POGGIO.

How now, Bergetto, whither away so fast ?
BERG. : O uncle ! I have heard the strangest news that ever came out of th
mint ; have I not, Poggio ?
POG. : Yes, indeed, sir.
DON. : What news, Bergetto ?
BERG. : Why, look ye, uncle, my barber told me just now, that there is
fellow come to town, who undertakes to make a mill go without the morta
help of any water or wind, only with sand-bags ; and this fellow hath
strange horse, a most excellent beast, I'll assure you, uncle, my barber says
whose head, to the head, to the wonder of all Christian people, stands jus
behind where his tail is. Is't not true, Poggio ?
POG. : So the barber swore, forsooth.
DON. : And you are running thither ?
BERG. : Ay, forsooth, uncle.

ON. : Wilt thou be a fool still ? Come, sir, you shall not go ; you have more mind of a puppet-play than on the business I told you : why, thou great baby, wilt never have wit ? wilt make thyself a May-game to all the world ?

OG. : Answer for yourself, master.

ERG. : Why, uncle, should I sit at home still, and not go abroad to see fashions like other gallants ?

ON. : To see hobby-horses ! what wise talk, I pray, had you with Annabella, when you were at Signior Florio's house ?

ERG. : Oh, the wench !—Uds sa'me, uncle, I tickled her with a rare speech, that I made her almost burst her belly with laughing.

ON. : Nay, I think so ; and what speech was't ?

ERG. : What did I say, Poggio ?

OG. : Forsooth, my master said, that he loved her almost as well as he loved parmasent ; and swore (I'll be sworn for him) that she wanted but such a nose as his was, to be as pretty a young woman as any was in Parma.

ON. : Oh gross !

ERG. : Nay, uncle ;—then she ask'd me, whether my father had more children than myself ? and I said no ; 'twere better he should have had his brains knock'd out first.

ON. : This is intolerable.

ERG. : Then said she, will Signior Donado, your uncle, leave you all his wealth?

ON. : Ha ! that was good ; did she harp upon that string ?

ERG. : Did she harp upon that string ! ay, that she did. I answered, " Leave me all his wealth ? why, woman, he hath no other wit ; if he had, he should hear on't to his everlasting glory and confusion : I know, quoth I, I am his white boy, and will not be gull'd ; " and with that she fell into a great smile, and went away. Nay, I did fit her.

ON. : Ah, sirrah, then I see there's no changing of nature. Well, Bergetto, I fear thou wilt be a very ass still.

ERG. : I should be sorry for that, uncle.

ON. : Come, come you home with me : since you are no better a speaker, I'll have you write to her after some courtly manner, and enclose some rich jewel in the letter.

ERG. : Ay marry, that will be excellent.

ON. : Peace, innocent !

Once in my time I'll set my wits to school,
If all fail, 'tis but the fortune of a fool.

ERG. : Poggio, 'twill do, Poggio ! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in* FLORIO'S *House.*

Enter GIOVANNI *and* ANNABELLA.

OV. : Come, Annabella, no more Sister now,
But Love, a name more gracious ; do not blush,
Beauty's sweet wonder, but be proud to know
That yielding thou hast conquer'd, and inflamed
A heart, whose tribute is thy brother's life.

NN. : And mine is his. Oh, how these stolen contents
Would print a modest crimson on my cheeks,
Had any but my heart's delight prevail'd !

GIOV. : I marvel why the chaster of your sex
Should think this pretty toy call'd maidenhead,
So strange a loss ; when, being lost, 'tis nothing,
And you are still the same.
ANN. : 'Tis well for you ;
Now you can talk.
GIOV. : Music as well consists
In th' ear, as in the playing.
ANN. : Oh, you are wanton !—
Tell on't, you were best ; do.
GIOV. : Thou wilt chide me then.
Kiss me—so ! thus hung Jove on Leda's neck,
And suck'd divine ambrosia from her lips,
I envy not the mightiest man alive ;
But hold myself, in being king of thee,
More great than were I king of all the world :
But I shall lose you, sweetheart.
ANN. : But you shall not.
GIOV. : You must be married, mistress.
ANN. : Yes, to whom ?
GIOV. : Some one must have you.
ANN. : You must.
GIOV. : Nay, some other.
ANN. : Now prithee do not speak so ; without jesting
You'll make me weep in earnest.
GIOV. : What, you will not !
But tell me, sweet, canst thou be dared to swear
That thou wilt live to me, and to no other ?
ANN. : By both our loves I dare ; for didst thou know,
My Giovanni, how all suitors seem
To my eyes hateful, thou would'st trust me then.
GIOV. : Enough, I take thy word : sweet, we must part ;
Remember what thou vow'st ; keep well my heart.
ANN. : Will you be gone ?
GIOV. : I must.
ANN. : When to return ?
GIOV. : Soon.
ANN. : Look you do.
GIOV. : Farewell. [*Exi*
ANN. : Go where thou wilt, in mind I'll keep thee here,
And where thou art, I know I shall be there.
Guardian !

Enter PUTANA.

PUT. : Child, how is't, child ? well, thank heav'n, ha ?
ANN. : O guardian, what a paradise of joy
Have I past over !
PUT. : Nay, what a paradise of joy have you past under ! why, now I commen
thee, charge. Fear nothing, sweet-heart ; what though he be your brother
your brother's a man, I hope ; and I say still, if a young wench feel the
upon her, let her take any body, father or brother, all is one.
ANN. : I would not have it known for all the world.
PUT. : Nor I indeed ; for the speech of the people ; else 'twere nothing.

'LO. (*within*) : Daughter Annabella !
ANN. : O me ! my father,——Here, sir :—reach my work.
'LO. (*within*) : What are you doing ?
ANN. : So ; let him come now.

Enter FLORIO, *followed by* RICHARDETTO *as a Doctor of Physic, and* PHILOTIS, *with a Lute.*

LO. : So hard at work ! that's well ; you lose no time.
Look, I have brought you company ; here's one,
A learned doctor, lately come from Padua,
Much skill'd in physic ; and, for that I see
You have of late been sickly, I entreated
This reverend man to visit you some time.
ANN. : You are very welcome, sir.
ICH. : I thank you, mistress :
Loud fame in large report hath spoke your praise,
As well for virtue as perfection ;
For which I have been bold to bring with me
A kinswoman of mine, a maid, for song
And music, one perhaps will give content ;
Please you to know her.
ANN. : They are parts I love,
And she for them most welcome.
HI. : Thank you, lady.
LO. : Sir, now you know my house, pray make not strange ;
And if you find my daughter need your art,
I'll be your pay-master.
ICH. : Sir, what I am
She shall command.
LO. : You shall bind me to you.
Daughter, I must have conference with you
About some matters that concern us both.
Good master doctor, please you but walk in,
We'll crave a little of your cousin's cunning ;
I think my girl hath not quite forgot
To touch an instrument ; she could have don't ;
We'll hear them both.
ICH. : I'll wait upon you, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* SORANZO'S *House.*

Enter SORANZO, *with a Book.*

Love's measure is extreme, the comfort pain ;
The life unrest, and the reward disdain.

What's here ? look't o'er again.—'Tis so ; so writes
This smooth licentious poet in his rhymes :
But, Sannazar, thou ly'st ; for, had thy bosom
Felt such oppression as is laid on mine,
Thou would'st have kiss'd the rod that made the [e] smart.
To work then, happy muse, and contradict
What Sannazar hath in his envy writ. [*Writes.*

Love's measure is the mean, sweet his annoys ;
His pleasures life, and his reward all joys.

Had Annabella liv'd when Sannazar
Did, in his brief Encomium, celebrate
Venice, that queen of cities, he had left
That verse which gain'd him such a sum of gold,
And for one only look from Annabel,
Had writ of her, and her diviner cheeks.
O, how my thoughts are——,

VAS. (*within*) : Pray forbear ; in rules of civility, let me give notice on't : I shall be tax'd of my neglect of duty and service.

SOR. : What rude intrusion interrupts my peace ?
Can I be no where private ?

VAS. (*within*) : Troth, you wrong your modesty.

SOR. : What's the matter, Vasques ? who is't ?

Enter HIPPOLITA *and* VASQUES.

HIP. : 'Tis I ;
Do you know me now ? Look, perjur'd man, on her
Whom thou and thy distracted lust have wrong'd.
Thy sensual rage of blood hath made my youth
A scorn to men and angels ; and shall I
Be now a foil to thy unsated change ?
Thou know'st, false wanton, when my modest fame
Stood free from stain or scandal, all the charms
Of hell or sorcery could not prevail
Against the honour of my chaster bosom.
Thine eyes did plead in tears, thy tongue in oaths,
Such, and so many, that a heart of steel
Would have been wrought to pity, as was mine ;
And shall the conquest of my lawful bed,
My husband's death, urg'd on by his disgrace,
My loss of womanhood, be ill-rewarded
With hatred and contempt ? No ; know, Soranzo.
I have a spirit doth as much distaste
The slavery of fearing thee, as thou
Dost loath the memory of what hath past.

SOR. : Nay, dear Hippolita—

HIP. : Call me not dear,
Nor think with supple words to smooth the grossness
Of my abuses ; 'tis not your new mistress.
Your goodly madam-merchant, shall triumph
On my dejection ; tell her thus from me,
My birth was nobler, and by much more free.

SOR. : You are too violent.

HIP. : You are too double
In your dissimulation. Seest thou this,
This habit, these black mourning weeds of care ?
'Tis thou art cause of this ; and hast divorced
My husband from his life, and me from him,
And made me widow in my widowhood.

SOR. : Will you yet hear ?

HIP. : More of thy perjuries ?
Thy soul is drown'd too deeply in those sins;
Thou need'st not add to th' number.

OR. : Then I'll leave you ;
You are past all rules of sense.
IP. : And thou of grace.
AS. : Fie, mistress, you are not near the limits of reason ; if my lord had a resolution as noble as virtue itself, you take the course to unedge it all. Sir, I beseech you do not perplex her ; griefs, alas, will have a vent : I dare undertake madam Hippolita will now freely hear you.
OR. : Talk to a woman frantic !—Are these the fruits of your love ?
IP. : They are the fruits of thy untruth, false man !
Did'st thou not swear, whilst yet my husband liv'd,
That thou would'st wish no happiness on earth
More than to call me wife ? did'st thou not vow,
When he should die, to marry me ? for which
The devil in my blood, and thy protests,
Caus'd me to counsel him to undertake
A voyage to Ligorne, for that we heard
His brother there was dead, and left a daughter
Young and unfriended, whom, with much ado,
I wish'd him to bring hither : he did so,
And went ; and, as thou know'st, died on the way.
Unhappy man, to buy his death so dear.
With my advice ! yet thou, for whom I did it,
Forget'st thy vows, and leav'st me to my shame.
OR. : Who could help this ?
IP. : Who ? perjur'd man ! thou could'st,
If thou had'st faith or love.
OR. : You are deceived :
The vows I made, if you remember well,
Were wicked and unlawful ; 'twere more sin
To keep them than to break them : as for me,
I cannot mask my penitence. Think thou
How much thou hast digress'd from honest shame,
In bringing of a gentleman to death,
Who was thy husband ; such a one as he,
So noble in his quality, condition,
Learning, behaviour, entertainment, love,
As Parma could not show a braver man.
AS. : You do not well ; this was not your promise.
OR. : I care not ; let her know her monstrous life.
Ere I'll be servile to so black a sin,
I'll be a curse.—Woman, come here no more ;
Learn to repent, and die ; for, by my honour,
I hate thee and thy lust : you have been too foul. [*Exit.*
AS. : This part has been scurvily play'd. [*Aside.*
IP. : How foolishly this beast contemns his fate,
And shuns the use of that, which I more scorn
Than I once lov'd, his love ! but let him go,
My vengeance shall give comfort to his woe. [*Going.*
AS. : Mistress, mistress, madam Hippolita ! pray, a word or two.
IP. : With me, sir ?
AS. : With you, if you please.
IP. : What is't ?
AS. : I know you are infinitely moved now, and you think you have cause; some I confess you have, but sure not so much as you imagine.

HIP. : Indeed !

VAS. : O you were miserably bitter, which you followed even to the last syllable ; 'faith, you were somewhat too shrewd : by my life, you could not have took my lord in a worse time since I first knew him ; to-morrow, you shall find him a new man.

HIP. : Well, I shall wait his leisure.

VAS. : Fie, this is not a hearty patience ; it comes sourly from you ; 'troth, let me persuade you for once.

HIP. : I have it, and it shall be so ; thanks opportunity—(*Aside*).—Persuade me ! to what ?

VAS. : Visit him in some milder temper. O, if you could but master a little your female spleen, how might you win him !

HIP. : He will never love me. Vasques, thou hast been a too trusty servant to such a master, and I believe thy reward in the end will fall out like mine.

VAS. : So perhaps too.

HIP. : Resolve thyself it will. Had I one so true, so truly honest, so secret to my counsels, as thou hast been to him and his, I should think it a slight acquittance, not only to make him master of all I have, but even of myself.

VAS. : O you are a noble gentlewoman !

HIP. : Wilt thou feed always upon hopes ? well, I know thou art wise, and seest the reward of an old servant daily, what it is.

VAS. : Beggary and neglect.

HIP. : True ; but, Vasques, wert thou mine, and would'st be private to me and my designs, I here protest, myself, and all what I can else call mine, should be at thy dispose.

VAS. : Work you that way, old mole ? then I have the wind of you —(*Aside.*)—I were not worthy of it by any desert that could lie—within my compass ; if I could—

HIP. : What then ?

VAS. : I should then hope to live in these my old years with rest and security.

HIP. : Give me thy hand : now promise but thy silence,
And help to bring to pass a plot I have ;
And here, in sight of Heaven, that being done,
I make thee lord of me and mine estate.

VAS. : Come, you are merry ; this is such a happiness that I can neither think or believe.

HIP. : Promise thy secrecy, and 'tis confirm'd.

VAS. : Then here I call our good genii for witnesses, what soever your designs are, or against whomsoever, I will not only be a special actor therein, but never disclose it till it be effected.

HIP. : I take thy word, and, with that, thee for mine ;
Come then, let's more confer of this anon.—
On this delicious bane my thought shall banquet,
Revenge shall sweeten what my griefs have tasted.

[*Aside, and exit with* VAS.

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter RICHARDETTO *and* PHILOTIS.

RICH. : Thou seest, my lovely niece, these strange mishaps,
How all my fortunes turn to my disgrace ;
Wherein I am but as a looker-on,
Whilst others act my shame, and I am silent.

PHI. : But, uncle, wherein can this borrow'd shape
Give you content ?
RICH. : I'll tell thee, gentle niece :
Thy wanton aunt in her lascivious riots
Lives now secure, thinks I am surely dead,
In my late journey to Ligorne for you ;
As I have caus'd it to be rumour'd out.
Now would I see with what an impudence
She gives scope to her loose adultery,
And how the common voice allows hereof ;
Thus far I have prevail'd.
PHI. : Alas, I fear
You mean some strange revenge.
RICH. : O be not troubled,
Your ignorance shall plead for you in all—
But to our business.—What ! you learn'd for certain,
How Signior Florio means to give his daughter
In marriage to Soranzo ?
PHI. : Yes, for certain.
RICH. : But how find you young Annabella's love
Inclined to him ?
PHI. : For aught I could perceive,
She neither fancies him or any else.
RICH. : There's mystery in that, which time must show.
She us'd you kindly ?
PHI. : Yes.
RICH. : And crav'd your company ?
PHI. : Often.
RICH. : 'Tis well ; it goes as I could wish.
I am the doctor now, and as for you,
None knows you ; if all fail not, we shall thrive.
But who comes here ?—I know him ; 'tis Grimaldi,
A Roman and a soldier, near allied
Unto the Duke of Montferrato, one
Attending on the nuncio of the pope
That now resides in Parma ; by which means
He hopes to get the love of Annabella.

Enter GRIMALDI.

GRIM. : Save you, sir.
RICH. : And you, sir.
GRIM. : I have heard.
Of your approved skill, which through the city
Is freely talk'd of, and would crave your aid.
RICH. : For what, sir ?
GRIM. : Marry, sir, for this——
But I would speak in private.
RICH. : Leave us, cousin. [PHI. *retires.*
GRIM. : I love fair Annabella, and would know
Whether in arts there may not be receipts
To move affection.
RICH. : Sir, perhaps there may ;
But these will nothing profit you.
GRIM. : Not me ?

RICH. : Unless I be mistook, you are a man
Greatly in favour with the cardinal.
GRIM. : What of that ?
RICH. : In duty to his grace,
I will be bold to tell you, if you seek
To marry Florio's daughter, you must first
Remove a bar 'twixt you and her.
GRIM. : Who's that ?
RICH. : Soranzo is the man that hath her heart,
And while he lives, be sure you cannot speed.
GRIM. : Soranzo ! what, mine enemy ? is it he ?
RICH. : Is he your enemy ?
GRIM. : The man I hate
Worse than confusion ; I will tell him straight.—
RICH. : Nay, then take my advice,
Even for his grace's sake the cardinal ;
I'll find a time when he and she do meet,
Of which I'll give you notice ; and, to be sure
He shall not scape you, I'll provide a poison
To dip your rapier's point in ; if he had
As many heads as Hydra had, he dies.
GRIM. : But shall I trust thee, doctor ?
RICH. : As yourself ;
Doubt not in aught.—[*Exit* GRIM.]—Thus shall the fates decree,
By me Soranzo falls, that ruin'd me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Another Part of the Street.*

Enter DONADO, *with a Letter*, BERGETTO, *and* POGGIO.

DON. : Well, sir, I must be content to be both your secretary and your messenger myself. I cannot tell what this letter may work ; but, as sure as I am alive, if thou come once to talk with her, I fear thou wilt mar whatsoever I make.
BER. : You make, uncle ! why am not I big enough to carry mine own letter, I pray ?
DON. : Ay, ay, carry a fool's head of thy own ! why, thou dunce, would'st thou write a letter, and carry it thyself ?
BER. : Yes, that I would, and read it to her with mine own mouth ; for you must think, if she will not believe me myself when she hears me speak, she will not believe another's hand-writing. Oh, you think I am a blockhead, uncle. No, sir, Poggio knows I have indited a letter myself ; so I have.
POG. : Yes, truly, sir, I have it in my pocket.
DON. : A sweet one, no doubt ; pray let's see it.
BER. : I cannot read my own hand very well, Poggio ; read it, Poggio.
DON. : Begin.
POG. (*reads*) : "Most dainty and honey-sweet mistress, I could call you fair, and lie as fast as any that loves you ; but my uncle being the elder man, I leave it to him, as more fit for his age, and the colour of his beard. I am wise enough to tell you I can bourd where I see occasion ; or if you like my uncle's wit better than mine, you shall marry me ; if you like mine better than his, I will marry you, in spite of your teeth. So commending my best parts to you, I rest

"Yours, upwards and downwards, or you may choose.
"BERGETTO."

BER. : Ah, ha ! here's stuff, uncle !

DON. : Here's stuff indeed—to shame us all. Pray whose advice did you take in this learned letter ?
POG. : None, upon my word, but mine own.
BER. : And mine, uncle, believe it, nobody's else ; 'twas mine own brain, I thank a good wit for't.
DON. : Get you home, sir, and look you keep within doors till I return.
BER. : How ? that were a jest indeed ! I scorn it, i'faith.
DON. : What ! you do not ?
BER. : Judge me, but I do now.
POG. : Indeed, sir, 'tis very unhealthy.
DON. : Well, sir, if I hear any of your apish running to motions and fopperies, till I come back, you were as good not ; look to't. [*Exit.*
BER. : Poggio, shall's steal to see this horse with the head in's tail ?
POG. : Ay, but you must take heed of whipping.
BER. : Dost take me for a child, Poggio ? Come, honest Poggio. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—FRIAR BONAVENTURA'S *Cell.*

Enter FRIAR *and* GIOVANNI.

FRIAR : Peace ! thou hast told a tale, whose every word
Threatens eternal slaughter to the soul ;
I'm sorry I have heard it : would mine ears
Had been one minute deaf, before the hour
That thou cam'st to me ! O young man, castaway,
By the religious number of mine order,
I day and night have wak'd my aged eyes
Above my strength, to weep on thy behalf :
But Heaven is angry, and be thou resolv'd,
Thou art a man remark'd to taste a mischief.
Look for't ; though it come late, it will come sure.
GIO. : Father, in this you are uncharitable ;
What I have done, I'll prove both fit and good.
It is a principle which you have taught,
When I was yet your scholar, that the frame
And composition of the mind doth follow
The frame and composition of [the] body
So, where the body's furniture is *beauty*,
The mind's must needs be *virtue* ; which allow'd,
Virtue itself is reason but refined,
And love the quintessence of that : this proves
My sister's beauty, being rarely fair,
Is rarely virtuous ; chiefly in her love,
And chiefly, in that love, her love to me :
If her's to me, then so is mine to her ;
Since in like causes are effects alike.
FRIAR : O ignorance in knowledge ! long ago,
How often have I warn'd thee this before ?
Indeed, if we were sure there were no Deity,
Nor heaven nor hell ; then to be led alone
By nature's light (as were philosophers
Of elder times) might instance some defence.
But 'tis not so : then, madman, thou wilt find,
That nature is in Heaven's positions blind.
GIO. : Your age o'errules you ; had you youth like mine,
You'd make her love your heaven, and her divine.

FRIAR : Nay, then I see thou'rt too far sold to hell :
It lies not in the compass of any prayers
To call thee back, yet let me counsel thee ;
Persuade thy sister to some marriage.
GIO. : Marriage ? why that's to damn her ; that's to prove
Her greedy of variety of lust.
FRIAR : O fearful ! if thou wilt not, give me leave
To shrive her, lest she should die unabsolved.
GIO. : At your best leisure, father : then she'll tell you,
How dearly she doth prize my matchless love ;
Then you will know what pity 'twere we two
Should have been sunder'd from each other's arms.
View well her face, and in that little round
You may observe a world's variety ;
For colour, lips : for sweet perfumes, her breath ;
For jewels, eyes ; for threads of purest gold,
Hair ; for delicious choice of flowers, cheeks !
Wonder in every portion of that throne.—
Hear her but speak, and you will swear the spheres
Make music to the citizens in heaven.—
But father, what is else for pleasure fram'd,
Lest I offend your ears, shall go unnam'd.
FRIAR : The more I hear, I pity thee the more ;
That one so excellent should give those parts
All to a second death. What I can do,
Is but to pray ; and yet—I could advise thee,
Wouldst thou be ruled.
GIO. : In what ?
FRIAR : Why leave her yet :
The throne of mercy is above your trespass ;
Yet time is left you both—
GIO. : To embrace each other,
Else let all time be struck quite out of number ;
She is like me, and I like her, resolv'd.
FRIAR : No more ! I'll visit her ;—this grieves me most,
Things being thus, a pair of souls are lost. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*A Room in* FLORIO'S *House.*

Enter FLORIO, DONADO, ANNABELLA, *and* PUTANA.

FLO. : Where is Giovanni ?
ANN. : Newly walk'd abroad,
And, as I heard him say, gone to the friar,
His reverend tutor.
FLO. : That's a blessed man,
A man made up of holiness ; I hope
He'll teach him how to gain another world.
DON. : Fair gentlewoman, here's a letter, sent
To you from my young cousin ; I dare swear
He loves you in his soul : would you could hear
Sometimes, what I see daily, sighs and tears,
As if his breast were prison to his heart.
FLO. : Receive it, Annabella.
ANN. : Alas, good man ! [*Takes the letter.*

DON. : What's that she said ?
PUT. : An't please you, sir, she said, " Alas, good man ! " Truly I do commend him to her every night before her first sleep, because I would have her dream of him ; and she hearkens to that most religiously.
DON. : Say'st so ? God a' mercy, Putana ! there is something for thee—(*Gives her money*)—and prithee do what thou canst on his behalf ; it shall not be lost labour, take my word for it.
PUT. : Thank you most heartily, sir ; now I have a feeling of your mind, let me alone to work.
ANN. : Guardian.
PUT. : Did you call ?
ANN. : Keep this letter.
DON. : Signior Florio, in any case bid her read it instantly.
FLO. : Keep it ! for what ? pray read it me hereright.
ANN. : I shall, sir. [*She reads the letter.*
DON. : How do you find her inclined, signior ?
FLO. : Troth, sir, I know not how ; not all so well
As I could wish.
ANN. : Sir, I am bound to rest your cousin's debtor.
The jewel I'll return ; for if he love,
I'll count that love a jewel.
DON. : Mark you that ?
Nay, keep them both, sweet maid.
ANN. : You must excuse me,
Indeed I will not keep it.
FLO. : Where's the ring,
That which your mother, in her will, bequeath'd,
And charged you on her blessing not to give it
To any but your husband ? send back that.
ANN. : I have it not.
FLO. : Ha ! have it not ; where is it ?
ANN. : My brother in the morning took it from me,
Said he would wear it to-day.
FLO. : Well, what do you say
To young Bergetto's love ! are you content to
Match with him ? speak.
DON. : There is the point, indeed.
ANN. : What shall I do ? I must say something now. [*Aside.*
FLO. : What say ? why do you not speak ?
ANN. : Sir, with your leave—
Please you to give me freedom ?
FLO. : Yes, you have [it.]
ANN. : Signior Donado, if your nephew mean
To raise his better fortunes in his match,
The hope of me will hinder such a hope :
Sir, if you love him, as I know you do,
Find one more worthy of his choice than me ;
In short, I'm sure I shall not be his wife.
DON. : Why here's plain dealing ; I commend thee for't ;
And all the worst I wish thee, is, heaven bless thee !
Your father yet and I will still be friends ;
Shall we not, Signior Florio ?
FLO. : Yes ; why not ?
Look, here your cousin comes.

Enter BERGETTO *and* POGGIO.

DON. : Oh coxcomb ! what doth he make here ?

BER. : Where is my uncle, sirs ?

DON. : What is the news now ?

BER. : Save you, uncle, save you ! You must not think I come for nothing, masters ; and how, and how is it ? what, you have read my letter ? ah, there I—tickled you, i'faith.

POG. : But 'twere better you had tickled her in another place.

BER. : Sirrah sweetheart, I'll tell thee a good jest ; and riddle what it is.

ANN. : You say you'll tell me.

BER. : As I was walking just now in the street, I met a swaggering fellow would needs take the wall of me ; and because he did thrust me, I very valiantly call'd him rogue ; he hereupon bade me draw, I told him I had more wit than so : but when he saw that I would not, he did so maul me with the hilt of his rapier, that my head sung whilst my feet caper'd in the kennel.

DON. : Was ever the like ass seen !

ANN. : And what did you all this while ?

BER. : Laugh at him for a gull, till I saw the blood run about mine ears, and then I could not choose but find in my heart to cry ; till a fellow with a broad beard (they say he is a new-come doctor) call'd me into his house, and gave me a plaster, look you, here 'tis ;—and, sir, there was a young wench wash'd my face and hands most excellently ; i'faith I shall love her as long as I live for it—did she not, Poggio ?

POG. : Yes, and kiss'd him too.

BER. : Why la now, you think I tell a lie, uncle, I warrant.

DON. : Would he that beat thy blood out of thy head, had beaten some wit into it ! for I fear thou never wilt have any.

BER. : Oh uncle, but there was a wench would have done a man's heart good to have look'd on her. By this light, she had a face methinks worth twenty of you, Mistress Annabella.

DON. : Was ever such a fool born ?

ANN. : I am glad she liked you, sir.

BER. : Are you so ? by my troth I thank you, forsooth.

FLO. : Sure it was the doctor's niece, that was last day with us here.

BER. : 'Twas she, 'twas she.

DON. : How do you know that, Simplicity ?

BER. : Why does he not say so ? if I should have said no, I should have given him the lie, uncle, and so have deserv'd a dry beating again ; I'll none of that.

FLO. : A very modest well-behav'd young maid, as I have seen.

DON. : Is she indeed ?

FLO. : Indeed she is, if I have any judgment.

DON. : Well, sir, now you are free : you need not care for sending letters now ; you are dismiss'd, your mistress here will none of you.

BER. : No ! why what care I for that ? I can have wenches enough in Parma for half a crown a-piece ; cannot I, Poggio ?

POG. : I'll warrant you, sir.

DON. : Signior Florio, I thank you for your free recourse you gave for my admittance ; and to you, fair maid, that jewel I will give you against your marriage. Come, will you go, sir ?

BER. : Ay, marry will I. Mistress, farewell, mistress ; I'll come again to-morrow —farewell, mistress. [*Exeunt* DONADO, BERGETTO, *and* POGGIO.

Enter GIOVANNI.

FLO. : Son, where have you been ? what alone, alone still ?
I would not have it so ; you must forsake
This over-bookish humour. Well ; your sister
Hath shook the fool off.
GIO. : 'Twas no match for her.
FLO. : 'Twas not indeed ; I meant it nothing less ;
Soranzo is the man I only like ;
Look on him, Annabella. Come, 'tis supper-time,
And it grows late. [*Exit.*
GIO. : Whose jewel's that ?
ANN. : Some sweetheart's.
GIO. : So I think.
ANN. : A lusty youth,
Signior Donado, gave it me to wear
Against my marriage.
GIO. : But you shall not wear it ;
Send it him back again.
ANN. : What, you are jealous ?
GIO. : That you shall know anon, at better leisure.
Welcome sweet night ! the evening crowns the day. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—*A Room in* DONADO'S *House.*

Enter BERGETTO *and* POGGIO.

BER. : Does my uncle think to make me a baby still ? No, Poggio ; he shall know I have a sconce now.
POG. : Ay, let him not bob you off like an ape with an apple.
BER. : 'Sfoot, I will have the wench, if he were ten uncles, in despite of his nose, Poggio.
POG. : Hold him to the grindstone, and give not a jot of ground ; she hath in a manner promised you already.
BER. : True, Poggio ; and her uncle, the doctor, swore I should marry her.
POG. : He swore ; I remember.
BER. : And I will have her, that's more : did'st see the cod piece-point she gave me, and the box of marmalade ?
POG. : Very well ; and kiss'd you, that my chops water'd at the sight on't : there is no way but to clap up a marriage in hugger-mugger.
BER. : I will do it ; for I tell thee, Poggio, I begin to grow valiant methinks, and my courage begins to rise.
POG. : Should you be afraid of your uncle ?
BER. : Hang him, old doating rascal ! no ; I say I will have her.
POG. : Lose no time then.
BER. : I will beget a race of wise men and constables that shall cart whores at their own charges ; and break the duke's peace ere I have done, myself. —Come away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* FLORIO'S *House.*

Enter FLORIO, GIOVANNI, SORANZO, ANNABELLA, PUTANA, *and* VASQUES.

FLO. : My lord Soranzo, though I must confess
The proffers that are made me have been great,
In marriage of my daughter ; yet the hope
Of your still rising honours has prevail'd

Above all other jointures : here she is ;
She knows my mind ; speak for yourself to her,
And hear you, daughter, see you use him nobly :
For any private speech, I'll give you time.
Come, son, and you the rest ; let them alone ;
Agree [they] as they may.

SOR. : I thank you, sir.

GIO. : Sister, be not all woman, think on me. [*Aside to* ANN.

SOR. : Vasques.

VAS. : My lord.

SOR. : Attend me without——

[*Exeunt all but* SORANZO *and* ANNABELLA.

ANN. : Sir, what's your will with me ?

SOR. : Do you not know
What I should tell you ?

ANN. : Yes ; you'll say you love me.

SOR. : And I will swear it too ; will you believe it ?

ANN. : 'Tis no point of faith.

Enter GIOVANNI *in the Gallery above.*

SOR. : Have you not will to love ?

ANN. : Not you.

SOR. : Whom then ?

ANN. : That's as the fates infer.

GIO. : Of those I'm regent now.

SOR. : What mean you, sweet ?

ANN. : To live and die a maid.

SOR. : Oh, that's unfit.

GIO. : Here's one can say that's but a woman's note.

SOR. : Did you but see my heart, then would you swear——

ANN. : That you were dead.

GIO. : That's true, or somewhat near it.

SOR. : See you these true love's tears ?

ANN. : No.

GIO. : Now she winks.

SOR. : They plead to you for grace.

ANN. : Yet nothing speak.

SOR. : Oh, grant my suit.

ANN. : What is't ?

SOR. : To let me live—

ANN. : Take it.

SOR. : Still yours.

ANN. : That is not mine to give.

GIO. : One such another word would kill his hopes.

SOR. : Mistress, to leave those fruitless strifes of wit,
Know I have lov'd you long, and lov'd you truly ;
Not hope of what you have, but what you are,
Hath drawn me on ; then let me not in vain
Still feel the rigour of your chaste disdain :
I'm sick, and sick to the heart.

ANN. : Help, aqua vitæ !

SOR. : What mean you ?

ANN. : Why, I thought you had been sick.

SOR. : Do you mock my love ?

GIO. : There, sir, she was too nimble.
SOR. : 'Tis plain ; she laughs at me.—(*Aside.*) These scornful taunts
Neither become your modesty or years.
ANN. : You are no looking-glass ; or if you were,
I would dress my language by you.
GIO. : I am confirm'd.
ANN. : To put you out of doubt, my lord, methinks
Your common sense should make you understand,
That if I lov'd you, or desired your love,
Some way I should have given you better tastes :
But since you are a nobleman, and one
I would not wish should spend his youth in hopes,
Let me advise you to forbear your suit,
And think I wish you well, I tell you this.
SOR. : Is't you speak this ?
ANN. : Yes, I myself ; yet know,
(Thus far I give you comfort,) if mine eyes
Could have pick'd out a man, amongst all those
That sued to me, to make a husband of,
You should have been that man ; let this suffice,
Be noble in your secrecy, and wise.
GIO. : Why, now I see she loves me.
ANN. : One word more.
As ever virtue liv'd within your mind,
As ever noble courses were your guide,
As ever you would have me know you lov'd me,
Let not my father know hereof by you ;
If I hereafter find that I must marry,
It shall be you or none.
SOR. : I take that promise.
ANN. : Oh, oh my head !
SOR. : What's the matter, not well ?
ANN. : Oh, I begin to sicken.
GIO. : Heaven forbid ! [*Exit from above.*
SOR. : Help, help, within there, ho !

Enter FLORIO, GIOVANNI, *and* PUTANA.

Look to your daughter, Signior Florio.
FLO. : Hold her up, she swoons.
GIO. : Sister, how do you ?
ANN. : Sick,—brother, are you there ?
FLO. : Convey her to bed instantly, whilst I send for a physician ; quickly I say.
PUT. : Alas, poor child ! [*Exeunt all but* SOR.

Re-enter VASQUES.

VAS. : My lord.
SOR. : Oh, Vasques ! now I doubly am undone,
Both in my present and my future hopes :
She plainly told me that she could not love,
And thereupon soon sicken'd ; and I fear
Her life's in danger.
VAS. : By'r lady, sir, and so is yours, if you knew all. (*Aside.*)—'Las, sir, I am sorry for that ; may be, 'tis but the maids-sickness, an over-flux of youth ; and then, sir, there is no such present remedy as present marriage. But hath she given you an absolute denial ?

SOR. : She hath, and she hath not ; I'm full of grief ;
But what she said, I'll tell thee as we go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the same.*

Enter GIOVANNI *and* PUTANA.

PUT. : Oh, sir, we are all undone, quite undone, utterly undone, and shamed for ever : your sister, oh your sister !

GIO. : What of her ? for heaven's sake, speak ; how does she ?

PUT. : Oh that ever I was born to see this day !

GIO. : She is not dead, ha ? is she ?

PUT. : Dead ! no, she is quick ;—'tis worse, she is with child. You know what you have done ; heaven forgive you ! 'tis too late to repent now, heaven help us !

GIO. : With child ! how dost thou know't ?

PUT. : How do I know't ? am I at these years ignorant what the meanings of qualms and water-pangs be ? of changing of colours, queasiness of stomachs, pukings, and another thing that I could name ? Do not for her and your credit's sake, spend the time in asking how, and which way, 'tis so : she is quick, upon my word ; if you let a physician see her water, you are undone.

GIO. : But in what case is she ?

PUT. : Prettily amended : 'twas but a fit, which I soon espied, and she must look for often henceforward.

GIO. : Commend me to her, bid her take no care ;
Let not the doctor visit her, I charge you ;
Make some excuse, till I return.—Oh me !
I have a world of business in my head.
Do not discomfort her—
How do these news perplex me ! If my father
Come to her, tell him she's recover'd well ;
Say 'twas but some ill diet—d'ye hear, woman ?
Look you to't.

PUT. : I will, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Another Room in the same.*

Enter FLORIO *and* RICHARDETTO.

FLO. : And how do you find her, sir ?

RICH. : Indifferent well ;
I see no danger, scarce perceive she's sick,
But that she told me, she had lately eaten
Melons, and, as she thought, those disagree'd
With her young stomach.

FLO. : Did you give her aught ?

RICH. : An easy surfeit-water, nothing else ;
You need not doubt her health : I rather think
Her sickness is a fulness of her blood—
You understand me ?

FLO. : I do ; you counsel well ;
And once, within these few days, will so order it,
She shall be married ere she know the time.

RICH. : Yet let not haste, sir, make unworthy choice ;
That were dishonour.

FLO. : Master doctor, no ;
I will not do so neither : in plain words,
My lord Soranzo is the man I mean.
RICH. : A noble and a virtuous gentleman.
FLO. : As any is in Parma : not far hence,
Dwells Father Bonaventure, a grave friar,
Once tutor to my son ; now at his cell
I'll have them married.
RICH. : You have plotted wisely.
FLO. : I'll send one straight to speak with him to-night.
RICH. : Soranzo's wise ; he will delay no time.
FLO. : It shall be so.

Enter FRIAR *and* GIOVANNI.

FRIAR : Good peace be here, and love !
FLO. : Welcome, religious friar ; you are one
That still bring blessing to the place you come to.
GIO. : Sir, with what speed I could, I did my best
To draw this holy man from forth his cell,
To visit my sick sister ; that with words
Of ghostly comfort, in this time of need,
He might absolve her whether she live or die.
FLO. : 'Twas well done, Giovanni ; thou herein
Hast shew'd a Christian's care, a brother's love :
Come, father, I'll conduct you to her chamber,
And one thing would entreat you.
FRIAR : Say on, sir.
FLO. : I have a father's dear impression,
And wish, before I fall into my grave,
That I might see her married, as 'tis fit ;
A word from you, grave man, will win her more
Than all our best persuasions.
FRIAR : Gentle, sir,
All this I'll say, that Heaven may prosper her. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*A Room in* RICHARDETTO'S *House.*

Enter GRIMALDI.

GRIM. : Now if the doctor keep his word, Soranzo,
Twenty to one you miss your bride. I know
'Tis an unnoble act, and not becomes
A soldier's valour ; but in terms of love,
Where merit cannot sway, policy must :
I am resolv'd, if this physician
Play not on both hands, then Soranzo falls.

Enter RICHARDETTO.

RICH. : You are come as I could wish ; this very night
Soranzo, 'tis ordain'd must be affied
To Annabella, and, for aught I know,
Married.
GRIM. : How !
RICH. : Yet your patience ;
The place, 'tis friar Bonaventure's cell.
Now I would wish you to bestow this night

In watching thereabouts ; 'tis but a night :—
If you miss now, to-morrow I'll know all.
GRIM. : Have you the poison ?
RICH. : Here 'tis, in this box ;
Doubt nothing, this will do't ; in any case,
As you respect your life, be quick and sure.
GRIM. : I'll speed him.
RICH. : Do.—Away ; for 'tis not safe
You should be seen much here,—ever my love !
GRIM. : And mine to you. [*Exit.*
RICH. : So ! if this hit, I'll laugh and hug revenge ;
And they that now dream of a wedding-feast,
May chance to mourn the lusty bridegroom's ruin :
But to my other business—niece Philotis !

Enter PHILOTIS.

PHI. : Uncle.
RICH. : My lovely niece,
You have bethought you ?
PHI. : Yes,—and, as you counsell'd,
Fashion'd my heart to love him ; but he swears
He will to-night be married ; for he fears
His uncle else, if he should know the drift,
Will hinder all, and call his coz to shrift.
RICH. : To-night ? why best of all ; but let me see,
I—ha! —yes,—so it shall be ; in disguise
We'll early to the friar's—I have thought on't.
PHI. : Uncle, he comes.

Enter BERGETTO *and* POGGIO.

RICH. : Welcome, my worthy coz.
BER. : Lass, pretty lass, come buss, lass ! A-ha, Poggio ! [*Kisses her.*
RICH. : There's hope of this yet. [*Aside.*
You shall have time enough ; withdraw a little,
We must confer at large.
BER. : Have you not sweetmeats, or dainty devices for me ?
PHI. : You shall [have] enough, sweetheart.
BER. : Sweetheart ! mark that, Poggio. By my troth I cannot choose but kiss thee once more for that word, *sweetheart*. Poggio, I have a monstrous swelling about my stomach, whatsoever the matter be.
POG. : You shall have physic for't, sir.
RICH. : Time runs apace.
BER. : Time's a blockhead.
RICH. : Be ruled ; when we have done what's fit to do,
Then you may kiss your fill, and bed her too. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—FLORIO'S *House*.

ANNABELLA'S *Chamber. A Table with Wax Lights :* ANNABELLA *at Confession before the* FRIAR *; she weeps and wrings her hands.*

FRIAR : I am glad to see this penance ; for, believe me,
You have unripp'd a soul so foul and guilty,
As I must tell you true, I marvel how

The earth hath borne you up ; but weep, weep on,
These tears may do you good ; weep faster yet,
Whilst I do read a lecture.

ANN. : Wretched creature !

FRIAR : Ay, you are wretched, miserably wretched,
Almost condemn'd alive. There is a place,
List, daughter ! in a black and hollow vault,
Where day is never seen ; there shines no sun,
But flaming horror of consuming fires,
A lightless sulphur, choak'd with smoky fogs
Of an infected darkness : in this place
Dwell many thousand thousand sundry sorts
Of never-dying deaths : there damned souls
Roar without pity ; there are gluttons fed
With toads and adders ; there is burning oil
Pour'd down the drunkard's throat ; the usurer
Is forced to sup whole draughts of molten gold ;
There is the murderer for ever stabb'd,
Yet can he never die ; there lies the wanton
On racks of burning steel, whilst in his soul
He feels the torment of his raging lust.—

ANN. : Mercy ! oh mercy !

FRIAR : There stand these wretched things,
Who have dream'd out whole years in lawless sheets
And secret incests, cursing one another :
Then you will wish each kiss your brother gave,
Had been a dagger's point ; then you shall hear
How he will cry, " Oh, would my wicked sister
Had first been damn'd, when she did yield to lust ! "—
But soft, methinks I see repentance work
New motions in your heart ; say, how is't with you ?

ANN. : Is there no way left to redeem my miseries ?

FRIAR : There is, despair not ; Heaven is merciful,
And offers grace even now. 'Tis thus agreed :
First, for your honour's safety, that you marry
My lord Soranzo ; next, to save your soul,
Leave off this life, and henceforth live to him.

ANN : Ah me !

FRIAR : Sigh not ; I know the baits of sin
Are hard to leave ; oh, 'tis a death to do't.
Remember what must come : are you content ?

ANN : I am.

FRIAR : I like it well ; we'll take the time.
Who's near us there ?

Enter FLORIO *and* GIOVANNI.

FLO. : Did you call, father ?

FRIAR : Is lord Soranzo come ?

FLO. : He stays below.

FRIAR : Have you acquainted him at full ?

FLO. : I have,
And he is overjoy'd.

FRIAR : And so are we :
Bid him come near.

GIO. : My sister weeping ?—Ha !
I fear this friar's falsehood.—(*Aside.*)—I will call him. [*Exit.*
FLO. : Daughter, are you resolv'd ?
ANN. : Father, I am.

Re-enter GIOVANNI, *with* SORANZO *and* VASQUES.

FLO. : My lord Soranzo, here
Give me your hand ; for that, I give you this. [*Joins their hands.*
SOR. : Lady, say you so too ?
ANN. : I do, and vow
To live with you and yours.
FRIAR : Timely resolv'd ;
My blessing rest on both ! more to be done,
You may perform it on the morning-sun. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—*The Street before the Monastery.*

Enter GRIMALDI *with his Rapier drawn, and a dark lantern.*

GRIM. : 'Tis early night as yet, and yet too soon
To finish such a work ; here I will lie
To listen who comes next. [*He lies down.*

Enter BERGETTO *and* PHILOTIS *disguised : and followed, at a distance, by* RICHARDETTO *and* POGGIO.

BER. : We are almost at the place, I hope, sweetheart.
GRIM. : I hear them near, and heard one say " sweetheart."
'Tis he ; now guide my hand, some angry justice,
Home to his bosom.—Now have at you, sir !
[*Stabs* BERGETTO, *and exit.*
BER. : Oh help, help ! here's a stitch fallen in my guts ; oh for a flesh-tailor quickly—Poggio !
PHI. : What ails my love ?
BER. : I am sure I cannot piss forward and backward, and yet I am wet before and behind ; lights ! lights ! ho, lights !
PHI. : Alas, some villain here has slain my love.
RICH. : Oh Heaven forbid it ; raise up the next neighbours
Instantly, Poggio, and bring lights. [*Exit* POG.
How is't, Bergetto ? slain ! It cannot be ;
Are you sure you are hurt ?
BER. : O my belly seethes like a porridge-pot ; some cold water, I shall boil over else : my whole body is in a sweat, that you may wring my shirt ; feel here—why, Poggio !

Re-enter POGGIO, *with* OFFICERS, *and Lights.*

POG. : Here ; alas ! how do you ?
RICH. : Give me a light. What's here ? all blood ! O sirs,
Signior Donado's nephew now is slain.
Follow the murderer with all the haste
Up to the city, he cannot be far hence ;
Follow, I beseech you.
OFFICERS : Follow, follow, follow. [*Exeunt.*
RICH. : Tear off thy linen, coz, to stop his wounds ;
Be of good comfort, man.
BER. : Is all this mine own blood ? nay, then, good night with me. Poggio, commend me to my uncle, dost hear ? bid him, for my sake, make much of

this wench : oh—I am going the wrong way sure, my belly aches so—oh farewell, Poggio!—oh!—oh!— [*Dies.*

PHI. : O, he is dead.

POG. : How ! dead !

RICH. : He's dead indeed ;
'Tis now too late to weep : let's have him home,
And, with what speed we may, find out the murderer.

POG. : Oh my master ! my master ! my master ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII.—*A Room in* HIPPOLITA'S *House.*

Enter VASQUES *and* HIPPOLITA.

HIP. : Betroth'd ?

VAS. : I saw it.

HIP. : And when's the marriage-day ?

VAS. : Some two days hence.

HIP. : Two days ! why man, I would but wish two hours,
To send him to his last, and lasting sleep ;
And, Vasques, thou shalt see I'll do it bravely.

VAS. : I do not doubt your wisdom, nor, I trust, you my secrecy ; I am infinitely yours.

HIP. : I will be thine in spite of my disgrace.
So soon ? O wicked man ! I durst be sworn,
He'd laugh to see me weep.

VAS. : And that's a villainous fault in him.

HIP. : No, let him laugh ; I am arm'd in my resolves :
Be thou still true.

VAS. : I should get little by treachery against so hopeful a preferment, as I am like to climb to—

HIP. : Even to—my bosom, Vasques. Let my youth
Revel in these new pleasures ; if we thrive,
He now hath but a pair of days to live. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX.—*The Street before the* CARDINAL'S *Gates.*

Enter FLORIO, DONADO, RICHARDETTO, POGGIO, *and* OFFICERS.

FLO. : 'Tis bootless now to shew yourself a child.
Signior Donado, what is done, is done ;
Spend not the time in tears, but seek for justice.

RICH. : I must confess, somewhat I was in fault,
That had not first acquainted you what love
Past 'twixt him and my niece ; but, as I live,
His fortune grieves me as it were mine own.

DON. : Alas, poor creature, he meant no man harm,
That I am sure of.

FLO. : I believe that too.
But stay, my masters ; are you sure you saw
The murderer pass here ?

OFFICER : An it please you, sir, we are sure we saw a ruffian, with a naked weapon in his hand all bloody, get into my lord Cardinal's grace's gate ; that we are sure of ; but for fear of his grace (bless us !) we durst go no farther.

DON. : Know you what manner of man he was ?

OFFICER : Yes sure, I know the man ; they say he is a soldier : he that lov'd your daughter, sir, an't please ye ; 'twas he for certain.
FLO. : Grimaldi, on my life.
OFFICER : Ay, ay, the same.
RICH. : The Cardinal is noble ; he no doubt
Will give true justice.
DON. : Knock some one at the gate.
POG. : I'll knock, sir. [*Knocks.*
SERV. (*within*) : What would ye ?
FLO. : We require speech with the lord Cardinal
About some present business ; pray inform
His grace that we are here.

Enter CARDINAL, *followed by* GRIMALDI.

CAR. : Why how now, friends ! what saucy mates are you,
That know nor duty nor civility ?
Are we a person fit to be your host ;
Or is our house become your common inn,
To beat our doors at pleasure ? What such haste
Is yours, as that it cannot wait fit times ?
Are you the masters of this commonwealth,
And know no more discretion ? Oh, your news
Is here before you ; you have lost a nephew,
Donado, last night by Grimaldi slain :
Is that your business ? well, sir, we have knowledge on't,
Let that suffice.
GRIM. : In presence of your grace,
In thought, I never meant Bergetto harm :
But, Florio, you can tell, with how much scorn
Soranzo, back'd with his confederates,
Hath often wrong'd me ; I to be reveng'd,
(For that I could not win him else to fight)
Had thought, by way of ambush, to have kill'd him,
But was, unluckily, therein mistook ;
Else he had felt what late Bergetto did :
And though my fault to him were merely chance,
Yet humbly I submit me to your grace, [*Kneeling.*
To do with me as you please.
CAR. : Rise up, Grimaldi. [*He rises.*
You citizens of Parma, if you seek
For justice, know, as Nuncio from the pope,
For this offence I here receive Grimaldi
Into his Holiness' protection ;
He is no common man, but nobly born,
Of princes' blood, though you, sir Florio,
Thought him too mean a husband for your daughter.
If more you seek for, you must go to Rome,
For he shall thither ; learn more wit for shame.—
Bury your dead :—away, Grimaldi—leave 'em !
[*Exeunt* CARDINAL *and* GRIMALDI.
DON. : Is this a churchman's voice ? dwells justice here ?.
FLO. : Justice is fled to heaven, and comes no nearer.
Soranzo ? —was't for him ? O impudence !
Had he the face to speak it, and not blush ?

Come, come, Donado, there's no help in this,
When cardinals think murder's not amiss :
Great men may do their wills, we must obey,
But Heaven will judge them for't, another day. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*A Room in* FLORIO'S *House. A Banquet set out. Hautboys.*
Enter the FRIAR, GIOVANNI, ANNABELLA, PHILOTIS, SORANZO, DONADO, FLORIO, RICHARDETTO, PUTANA, *and* VASQUES.

FRIAR : These holy rites perform'd, now take your times
To spend the remnant of the day in feast ;
Such fit repasts are pleasing to the saints,
Who are your guests, though not with mortal eyes
To be beheld.—Long prosper in this day,
You happy couple, to each other's joy !
SOR. : Father, your prayer is heard : the hand of goodness
Hath been a shield for me against my death ;
And, more to bless me, hath enrich'd my life
With this most precious jewel ; such a prize
As earth hath not another like to this.
Cheer up, my love ; and, gentlemen, my friends,
Rejoice with me in mirth : this day we'll crown
With lusty cups to Annabella's health.
GIO. : Oh torture ! were the marriage yet undone,
Ere I'd endure this sight, to see my love
Clipt by another, I would dare confusion,
And stand the horror of ten thousand deaths. [*Aside.*
VAS. : Are you not well, sir ?
GIO. : Prithee, fellow, wait ;
I need not thy officious diligence.
FLO. : Signior Donado, come, you must forget
Your late mishaps, and drown your cares in wine.
SOR. : Vasques !
VAS. : My lord.
SOR. : Reach me that weighty bowl.
Here, brother Giovanni, here's to you,
Your turn comes next, though now a bachelor ;
Here's to your sister's happiness, and mine !
[*Drinks, and offers him the bowl.*
GIO. : I cannot drink.
SOR. : What !
GIO. : 'Twill indeed offend me.
ANN. : Pray do not urge him, if he be not willing. [*Hautboys.*
FLO. : How now ! what noise is this ?
VAS. : O sir, I had forgot to tell you ; certain young maidens of Parma, in honour to madam Annabella's marriage, have sent their loves to her in a Masque, for which they humbly crave your patience and silence.
SOR. : We are much bound to them ; so much the more,
As it comes unexpected : guide them in.

Enter HIPPOLITA, *followed by* LADIES *in white Robes, with Garlands of Willows, all masked.*

MUSIC AND A DANCE.

SOR. : Thanks, lovely virgins ! now might we but know

To whom we have been beholding for [this] love,
We shall acknowledge it.

HIP. : Yes, you shall know :
What think you now? [*Unmasks.*

OMNES. : Hippolita!

HIP. : 'Tis she ;
Be not amaz'd ; nor blush, young lovely bride,
I come not to defraud you of your man :
'Tis now no time to reckon up the talk
What Parma long hath rumour'd of us both ;
Let rash report run on ! the breath that vents it
Will, like a bubble, break itself at last.
But now to you, sweet creature :—lend your hand—
Perhaps it hath been said, that I would claim
Some interest in Soranzo, now your lord ;
What I have right to do, his soul knows best :
But in my duty to your noble worth,
Sweet Annabella, and my care of you,
Here, take, Soranzo, take this hand from me,
I'll once more join, what by the holy church
Is finished and allow'd.—Have I done well?

SOR. : You have too much engaged us.

HIP. : One thing more.
That you may know my single charity,
Freely I here remit all interest
I e'er could claim, and give you back your vows ;
And to confirm't,—reach me a cup of wine—
[VAS. *gives her a poisoned cup.*
My lord Soranzo, in this draught I drink
Long rest t'ye !—(*she drinks*)—look to it, Vasques. [*Aside.*

VAS. : Fear nothing—

SOR. : Hippolita, I thank you ; and will pledge
This happy union as another life.
Wine, there !

VAS. : You shall have none : neither shall you pledge her.

HIP. : How !

VAS. : Know now, mistress she-devil, your own mischievous treachery hath kill'd you ; I must not marry you.

HIP. : Villain !

OMNES. : What's the matter?

VAS. : Foolish woman, thou art now like a firebrand, that hath kindled others and burnt thyself :—*troppo sperar, inganna,*—thy vain hope hath deceived thee ; thou art but dead ; if thou hast any grace, pray.

HIP. : Monster !

VAS. : Die in charity, for shame.—This thing of malice, this woman, hath privately corrupted me with promise of [marriage,] under this politic reconciliation, to poison my lord, whilst she might laugh at his confusion on his marriage-day. I promised her fair ; but I knew what my reward should have been, and would willingly have spared her life, but that I was acquainted with the danger of her disposition ; and now have fitted her a just payment in her own coin : there she is, she hath yet——and end thy days in peace, vile woman ; as for life, there's no hope, think not on't.

OMNES. : Wonderful justice !

RICH. : Heaven, thou art righteous.

HIP. : O 'tis true,
I feel my minute coming. Had that slave
Kept promise,—O my torment !—thou this hour.
Hadst dy'd, Soranzo—heat above hell-fire !—
Yet, ere I pass away—cruel, cruel flames !—
Take here my curse amongst you ; may thy bed
Of marriage be a rack unto thy heart,
Burn blood, and boil in vengeance—O my heart,
My flame's intolerable—may'st thou live
To father bastards ; may her womb bring forth
Monsters—and die together in your sins,
Hated, scorn'd and unpitied !—oh—oh— [*Dies.*
FLO. : Was e'er so vile a creature !
RICH. : Here's the end
Of lust and pride.
ANN. : It is a fearful sight.
SOR. : Vasques, I know thee now a trusty servant,
And never will forget thee.——Come, my love,
We'll home, and thank the heavens for this escape.
Father and friends, we must break up this mirth ;
It is too sad a feast.
DON. : Bear hence the body.
FRIAR (*aside to* GIO.) : Here's an ominous change !
Mark this, my Giovanni, and take heed !—
I fear the event ; that marriage seldom's good,
Where the bride-banquet so begins in blood. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* RICHARDETTO'S *House.*

Enter RICHARDETTO *and* PHILOTIS.

RICH. : My wretched wife, more wretched in her shame
Than in her wrongs to me, hath paid too soon
The forfeit of her modesty and life.
And I am sure, my niece, though vengeance hover,
Keeping aloof yet from Soranzo's fall,
Yet he will fall, and sink with his own weight.
I need not now (my heart persuades me so,)
To further his confusion ; there is One
Above begins to work ; for, as I hear,
Debates already 'twixt his wife and him
Thicken and run to head ; she, as 'tis said,
Slightens his love, and he abandons her's :
Much talk I hear. Since things go thus, my niece,
In tender love and pity of your youth,
My counsel is, that you should free your years
From hazard of these woes, by flying hence
To fair Cremona, there to vow your soul
In holiness, a holy votaress ;
Leave me to see the end of these extremes.
All human worldly courses are uneven,
No life is blessed but the way to heaven.
PHI. : Uncle, shall I resolve to be a nun ?
RICH. : Ay, gentle niece ; and in your hourly prayers
Remember me, your poor unhappy uncle.

Hie to Cremona now, as fortune leads,
Your home your cloister, your best friends your beads ;
Your chaste and single life shall crown your birth,
Who dies a virgin, lives a saint on earth.

PHI. : Then farewell, world, and worldly thoughts, adieu !
Welcome, chaste vows, myself I yield to you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Chamber in* SORANZO'S *House.*

Enter SORANZO *unbraced, and dragging in* ANNABELLA.

SOR. : Come, strumpet, famous whore ! were every drop
Of blood that runs in thy adulterous veins
A life, this sword (dost see't ?) should in one blow
Confound them all. Harlot, rare, notable harlot,
That with thy brazen face maintain'st thy sin,
Was there no man in Parma to be bawd
To your loose cunning whoredom else but I ?
Must your hot itch and pleurisy of lust,
The heyday of your luxury, be fed
Up to a surfeit, and could none but I
Be pick'd out to be cloak to your close tricks,
Your belly-sports ?—Now I must be the dad
To all that gallimaufry that is stuff'd
In thy corrupted bastard-bearing womb !—
Why, must I ?

ANN. : Beastly man ! Why ?—'tis thy fate.
I sued not to thee ; for, but that I thought
Your over-loving lordship would have run
Mad on denial, had you lent me time,
I would have told you in what case I was :
But you would needs be doing.

SOR. : Whore of whores !
Darest thou tell me this ?

ANN. : O yes ; why not ?
You were deceived in me ; 'twas not for love
I chose you, but for honour ; yet know this,
Would you be patient yet, and hide your shame,
I'd see whether I could love you.

SOR. : Excellent quean !
Why, art thou not with child ?

ANN. : What needs all this,
When 'tis superfluous ? I confess I am.

SOR. : Tell me by whom.

ANN. : Soft, 'twas not in my bargain.
Yet somewhat, sir, to stay your longing stomach
I am content t' acquaint you with ; THE man.
The more than man, that got this sprightly boy,—
(For 'tis a boy, [and] therefore glory, sir.
Your heir shall be a son)—

SOR. : Damnable monster !

ANN. : Nay, an you will not hear, I'll speak no more.

SOR. : Yes speak, and speak thy last.

ANN. : A match, a match !
This noble creature was in every part
So angel-like, so glorious, that a woman,
Who had not been but human, as was I,
Would have kneel'd to him, and have begg'd for love,—
You ! why you are not worthy once to name
His name without true worship, or, indeed,
Unless you kneel'd, to hear another name him.

SOR. : What was he call'd ?

ANN. : We are not come to that ;
Let it suffice, that you shall have the glory
To father what so brave a father got.
In brief, had not this chance fall'n out as it doth,
I never had been troubled with a thought
That you had been a creature ;—but for marriage,
I scarce dream yet of that.

SOR. : Tell me his name.
ANN. : Alas, alas, there's all ! will you believe ?
SOR. : What ?
ANN. : You shall never know.
SOR. : How !
ANN. : Never ; if
You do, let me be curs'd.
SOR. : Not know it, strumpet ! I'll rip up thy heart,
And find it there.
ANN. : Do, do.
SOR. : And with my teeth,
Tear the prodigious letcher joint by joint.
ANN. : Ha, ha, ha ! the man's merry.
SOR. : Dost thou laugh ?
Come, whore, tell me your lover, or by truth
I'll hew thy flesh to shreds ; who is't ?
ANN. : *Che morte piu dolce che morire per amore ?* [*Sings.*
SOR. : Thus will I pull thy hair, and thus I'll drag
Thy lust be-leper'd body through the dust—
[*Hales her up and down.*
Yet tell his name.
ANN. : *Morendo in grazia dee morire senza dolore ?* [*Sings.*
SOR. : Dost thou triumph ? the treasure of the earth
Shall not redeem thee ; were there kneeling kings
Did beg thy life, or angels did come down
To plead in tears, yet should not all prevail
Against my rage : dost thou not tremble yet ?
ANN. : At what ? to die ! no, be a gallant hangman ;
I dare thee to the worst : strike, and strike home ;
I leave revenge behind, and thou shalt feel it.
SOR. : Yet tell me ere thou diest, and tell me truly,
Knows thy old father this ?
ANN. : No, by my life.
SOR. : Wilt thou confess, and I will spare thy life ?
ANN. : My life ! I will not buy my life so dear.
SOR. : I will not slack my vengeance.
[*Draws his sword.*

Enter VASQUES.

VAS. : What do you mean, sir ?

SOR. : Forbear, Vasques ; such a damned whore
Deserves no pity.

VAS. : Now the gods forefend !
And would you be her executioner, and kill her in your rage too ? O 'twere most unmanlike ; she is your wife, what faults have been done by her before she married you, were not against you : alas ! poor lady, what hath she committed, which any lady in Italy in the like case would not ? sir, you must be ruled by your reason, and not by your fury ; that were inhuman and beastly.

SOR. : She shall not live.

VAS. : Come, she must : you would have her confess the authors of her present misfortunes, I warrant you ; 'tis an unconscionable demand, and she should lose the estimation that I, for my part, hold of her worth, if she had done it : why, sir, you ought not, of all men living, to know it. Good sir, be reconciled ; alas, good gentlewoman !

ANN. : Pish, do not beg for me, I prize my life
As nothing ; if the man will needs be mad,
Why let him take it.

SOR. : Vasques, hear'st thou this ?

VAS. : Yes, and commend her for it ; in this she shews the nobleness of a gallant spirit, and beshrew my heart, but it becomes her rarely,—(*aside to* SOR.)—Sir, in any case smother your revenge ; leave the scenting out your wrongs to me ; be ruled, as you respect your honour, or you marr all.—(*Aloud.*)—Sir, if ever my service were of any credit with you, be not so violent in your distractions : you are married now ; what a triumph might the report of this give to other neglected suitors ! 'tis as manlike to bear extremities, as godlike to forgive.

SOR. : O Vasques, Vasques, in this piece of flesh,
This faithless face of hers, had I laid up
The treasure of my heart. Hadst thou been virtuous,
Fair, wicked woman, not the matchless joys
Of life itself, had made me wish to live
With any saint but thee : deceitful creature,
How hast thou mock'd my hopes, and in the shame
Of thy lewd womb even buried me alive !
I did too dearly love thee.

VAS. : This is well ; follow this temper with some passion ; be brief and moving, 'tis for the purpose. [*Aside to* SOR.

SOR. : Be witness to my words thy soul and thoughts ;
And tell me, didst not think that in my heart
I did too superstitiously adore thee ?

ANN. : I must confess, I know you lov'd me well.

SOR. : And would'st thou use me thus ! O Annabella,
Be thou assured, whoe'er the villain was
That thus hath tempted thee to this disgrace,
Well he might lust, but never loved like me.
He doted on the picture that hung out
Upon thy cheeks, to please his humorous eye ;
For on the part I lov'd, which was thy heart,
And, as I thought, thy virtues.

ANN. : O, my lord !
These words wound deeper than your sword could do.

VAS. : Let me not ever take comfort, but I begin to weep myself, so much I pity him ; why, madam, I knew, when his rage was over-past, what it would come to.

SOR. : Forgive me, Annabella : though thy youth
Hath tempted thee above thy strength to folly,
Yet will I not forget what I should be,
And what I am, a husband ; in that name
Is hid divinity : if I do find
That thou wilt yet be true, here I remit
All former faults, and take thee to my bosom.

VAS. : By my troth, and that's a point of noble charity.

ANN. : Sir, on my knees——

SOR. : Rise up, you shall not kneel.
Get you to your chamber, see you make no shew
Of alteration ; I'll be with you straight :
My reason tells me now, that " 'tis as common
To err in frailty as to be a woman."
Go to your chamber. [*Exit* ANN.

VAS. : So ! this was somewhat to the matter : what do you think of your heaven of happiness now, sir ?

SOR. : I carry hell about me, all my blood
Is fired in swift revenge.

VAS. : That may be ; but know you how, or on whom ? Alas ! to marry a great woman, being made great in the stock to your hand, is a usual sport in these days ; but to know what ferret it was that hunted your coney-burrow,—there is the cunning.

SOR. : I'll make her tell herself, or——

VAS. : Or what ? you must not do so ; let me yet persuade your sufferance a little while : go to her, use her mildly ; win her, if it be possible, to a voluntary, to a weeping tune ; for the rest, if all hit, I will not miss my mark. Pray, sir, go in ; the next news I tell you shall be wonders.

SOR. : Delay in vengeance gives a heavier blow. [*Exit.*

VAS. : Ah, sirrah, here's work for the nonce ! I had a suspicion of a bad matter in my head a pretty while ago ; but after my madam's scurvy looks here at home, her waspish perverseness, and loud fault-finding, then I remembered the proverb, that " where hens crow, and cocks hold their peace, there are sorry houses." 'Sfoot, if the lower parts of a she-tailor's cunning can cover such a swelling in the stomach, I'll never blame a false stitch in a shoe whilst I live again. Up, and up so quick ? and so quickly too ? 'twere a fine policy to learn by whom : this must be known ; and I have thought on't—

Enter PUTANA, *in tears.*

Here's the way, or none.—What, crying, old mistress ! alas, alas, I cannot blame you ; we have a lord, Heaven help us, is so mad as the devil himself, the more shame for him.

PUT. : O Vasques, that ever I was born to see this day ! Doth he use thee so too, sometimes, Vasques ?

VAS. : Me ? why he makes a dog of me : but if some were of my mind, I know what we would do. As sure as I am an honest man, he will go near to kill my lady with unkindness : say she be with child, is that such a matter for a young woman of her years to be blamed for ?

PUT. : Alas, good heart, it is against her will full sore.

VAS. : I durst be sworn, all his madness is for that she will not confess whose 'tis, which he will know ; and when he doth know it, I am so well acquainted

with his humour, that he will forget all strait : well, I could wish she would in plain terms tell all, for that's the way, indeed.

PUT. : Do you think so ?

VAS. : Foh, I know it ; provided that he did not win her to it by force. He was once in a mind that you could tell, and meant to have wrung it out of you ; but I somewhat pacified him from that ; yet sure you know a great deal.

PUT. : Heaven forgive us all ! I know a little, Vasques.

VAS. : Why should you not ? who else should ? Upon my conscience she loves you dearly ; and you would not betray her to any affliction for the world.

PUT. : Nor for all the world, by my faith and troth, Vasques.

VAS. : 'Twere pity of your life if you should ; but in this you should both relieve her present discomforts, pacify my lord, and gain yourself everlasting love and preferment.

PUT. : Dost think so, Vasques ?

VAS. : Nay, I know it ; sure it was some near and entire friend.

PUT. : 'Twas a dear friend indeed ; but—

VAS. : But what ? fear not to name him ; my life between you and danger : 'faith, I think it was no base fellow.

PUT. : Thou wilt stand between me and harm ?

VAS. : 'Uds pity, what else ? you shall be rewarded too, trust me.

PUT. : 'Twas even no worse than her own brother.

VAS. : Her brother Giovanni, I warrant you !

PUT. : Even he, Vasques ; as brave a gentleman as ever kiss'd fair lady. O they love most perpetually.

VAS. : A brave gentleman indeed ! why therein I commend her choice—better and better—(*aside*)—You are sure 'twas he ?

PUT. : Sure ; and you shall see he will not be long from her too.

VAS. : He were to blame if he would ; but may I believe thee ?

PUT. : Believe me ! why, dost think I am a Turk or a Jew ? No, Vasques, I have known their dealings too long, to belie them now.

VAS. : Where are you ? there, within, sirs !

Enter BANDITTI.

PUT. : How now, what are these ?

VAS. : You shall know presently. Come, sirs, take me this old damnable hag, gag her instantly, and put out her eyes, quickly, quickly !

PUT. : Vasques ! Vasques !

VAS. : Gag her, I say ; 'sfoot, do you suffer her to prate ? what do you fumble about ? let me come to her. I'll help your old gums, you toad-bellied bitch ! (*they gag her.*) Sirs, carry her closely unto the coal-house, and put out her eyes instantly ; if she roars, slit her nose ; do you hear, be speedy and sure.

[*Exeunt* BAN. *with* PUT.

Why this is excellent, and above expectation—her own brother ! O horrible ! to what a height of liberty in damnation hath the devil trained our age ! her brother, well ! there's yet but a beginning ; I must to my lord, and tutor him better in his points of vengeance : now I see how a smooth tale goes beyond a smooth tail ; but soft—what thing comes next ? Giovanni ! as I could wish ; my belief is strengthened, 'tis as firm as winter and summer.

Enter GIOVANNI.

GIO. : Where's my sister ?

VAS. : Troubled with a new sickness, my lord ; she's somewhat ill.

GIO. : Took too much of the flesh, I believe.

VAS. : Troth, sir, and you I think have even hit it ; but my virtuous lady——

GIO. : Where is she ?

VAS. : In her chamber ; please you visit her ; she is alone. (GIO. *gives him money.*)
Your liberality hath doubly made me your servant, and ever shall, ever——
[*Exit* GIO.

Re-enter SORANZO.

Sir, I am made a man ; I have plied my cue with cunning and success ; I beseech you let us be private.

SOR. : My lady's brother's come ; now he'll know all.

VAS. : Let him know it ; I have made some of them fast enough. How have you dealt with my lady ?

SOR. : Gently, as thou hast counsell'd ; O my soul
Runs circular in sorrow for revenge ;
But, Vasques, thou shalt know——

VAS. : Nay, I will know no more, for now comes your turn to know ; I would not talk so openly with you—let my young master take time enough, and go at pleasure ; he is sold to death, and the devil shall not ransom him.—Sir, I beseech you, your privacy.

SOR. : No conquest can gain glory of my fear. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—*The Street before* SORANZO'S *House.*

ANNABELLA *appears at a Window above.*

ANN. : Pleasures, farewell, and all ye thriftless minutes
Wherein false joys have spun a weary life !
To these my fortunes now I take my leave.
Thou, precious Time, that swiftly rid'st in post
Over the world, to finish up the race
Of my last fate, here stay thy restless course,
And bear to ages that are yet unborn
A wretched, woeful woman's tragedy !
My conscience now stands up against my lust,
With depositions character'd in guilt.

Enter FRIAR, *below.*

And tells me I am lost : now I confess ;
Beauty that clothes the outside of the face,
Is cursed if it be not cloth'd with grace.
Here like a turtle, (mew'd up in a cage,)
Unmated, I converse with air and walls,
And descant on my vile unhappiness.
O Giovanni, that hast had the spoil
Of thine own virtues, and my modest fame ;
Would thou hadst been less subject to those stars
That luckless reign'd at my nativity !
O would the scourge, due to my black offence,
Might pass from thee, that I alone might feel
The torment of an uncontrouled flame !

FRIAR : What's this I hear ?

ANN. : That man, that blessed friar,
Who join'd in ceremonial knot my hand
To him whose wife I now am, told me oft,
I trod the path to death, and shew'd me how.
But they who sleep in lethargies of lust,

Hug their confusion, making Heaven unjust ;
And so did I.

FRIAR : Here's music to the soul !

ANN. : Forgive me, my good Genius, and this once
Be helpful to my ends ; let some good man
Pass this way, to whose trust I may commit
This paper, double lined with tears and blood ;
Which being granted, here I sadly vow
Repentance, and a leaving of that life
I long have died in.

FRIAR : Lady, Heaven hath heard you,
And hath by providence ordain'd, that I
Should be his minister for your behoof.

ANN. : Ha, what are you ?

FRIAR : Your brother's friend, the Friar ;
Glad in my soul that I have liv'd to hear
This free confession 'twixt your peace and you :
What would you, or to whom ? fear not to speak.

ANN. : Is Heaven so bountiful ?—then I have found
More favour than I hoped ; here, holy man——

[*Throws down a letter.*

Commend me to my brother, give him that,
That letter ; bid him read it, and repent.
Tell him that I, imprison'd in my chamber,
Barr'd of all company, even of my guardian,
(Which gives me cause of much suspect) have time
To blush at what hath past ; bid him be wise,
And not believe the friendship of my lord ;
I fear much more than I can speak : good father,
The place is dangerous, and spies are busy.
I must break off.—you'll do't ?

FRIAR : Be sure I will,
And fly with speed :——my blessing ever rest
With thee, my daughter ; live, to die more blest ! [*Exit.*

ANN. : Thanks to the heavens, who have prolong'd my breath
To this good use ! now I can welcome death.

[*Withdraws from the window.*

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the same.*

Enter SORANZO *and* VASQUES.

VAS. : Am I to be believed now ? first, marry a strumpet that cast herself away upon you but to laugh at your horns ! to feast on your disgrace, riot in your vexations, cuckold you in your bride-bed, waste your estate upon panders and bawds !—

SOR. : No more, I say, no more.

VAS. : A cuckold is a goodly tame beast, my lord !

SOR. : I am resolv'd ; urge not another word :
My thoughts are great, and all as resolute
As thunder ; in mean time, I'll cause our lady
To deck herself in all her bridal robes ;
Kiss her, and fold her gently in my arms.
Begone—yet hear you, are the banditti ready
To wait in ambush ?

VAS. : Good sir, trouble not yourself about other business than your own resolution ; remember that time lost cannot be recalled.

SOR. : With all the cunning words thou canst, invite
The states of Parma to my birth-day's feast :
Haste to my brother-rival and his father,
Entreat them gently, bid them not to fail ;
Be speedy, and return.

VAS. : Let not your pity betray you, till my coming back ; think upon incest and cuckoldry.

SOR. : Revenge is all the ambition I aspire,
To that I'll climb or fall ; my blood's on fire. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in* FLORIO'S *House.*

Enter GIOVANNI.

GIO. : Busy opinion is an idle fool,
That, as a school-rod keeps a child in awe,
Frights th' unexperienced temper of the mind :
So did it me ; who, ere my precious sister
Was married, thought all taste of love would die
In such a contract ; but I find no change
Of pleasure in this formal law of sports.
She is still one to me, and every kiss
As sweet and as delicious as the first
I reap'd, when yet the privilege of youth
Entitled her a virgin. O the glory
Of two united hearts like hers and mine !
Let poring book-men dream of other worlds ;
My world, and all of happiness is here,
And I'd not change it for the best to come :
A life of pleasure is Elysium.

Enter FRIAR.

Father, you enter on the jubilee
Of my retired delights ; now I can tell you,
The hell you oft have prompted, is nought else
But slavish and fond superstitious fear ;
And I could prove it too——

FRIAR : Thy blindness slays thee :
Look there, 'tis writ to thee. [*Gives him the letter.*

GIO. : From whom ?

FRIAR : Unrip the seals and see ;
The blood's yet seething hot, that will anon
Be frozen harder than congealed coral.—
Why d'ye change colour, son ?

GIO. : 'Fore heaven, you make
Some petty devil factor 'twixt my love
And your religion-masked sorceries.
Where had you this ?

FRIAR : Thy conscience, youth, is sear'd,
Else thou would'st stoop to warning.

GIO. : 'Tis her hand,
I know't ; and 'tis all written in her blood.
She writes I know not what. *Death !* I'll not fear
An armed thunderbolt aim'd at my heart.

She writes, we are discover'd—pox on dreams
Of low faint-hearted cowardice !—discover'd ?
The devil we are ! which way is't possible ?
Are we grown traitors to our own delights ?
Confusion take such dotage ! 'tis but forged ;
This is your peevish chattering, weak old man !—
Now, sir, what news bring you ?

Enter VASQUES.

VAS. : My lord, according to his yearly custom, keeping this day a feast in honour of his birth-day, by me invites you thither. Your worthy father, with the pope's reverend nuncio, and other magnificoes of Parma, have promised their presence ; will't please you to be of the number ?
GIO. : Yes, tell [him] I *dare* come.
VAS. : Dare come ?
GIO. : So I said ; and tell him more, I *will* come.
VAS. : These words are strange to me.
GIO. : Say, I will come.
VAS. : You will not miss ?
GIO. : Yet more ! I'll come, sir. Are you answered ?
VAS. : So I'll say——my service to you. [*Exit.*
FRIAR : You will not go, I trust.
GIO. : Not go ! for what ?
FRIAR : O, do not go ; this feast, I'll gage my life,
Is but a plot to train you to your ruin ;
Be ruled, you shall not go.
GIO. : Not go ! stood death
Threatening his armies of confounding plagues,
With hosts of dangers hot as blazing stars,
I would be there ; not go ! yes, and resolve
To strike as deep in slaughter as they all ;
For I will go.
FRIAR : Go where thou wilt ;—I see
The wildness of thy fate draws to an end,
To a bad fearful end :—I must not stay
To know thy fall ; back to Bononia I
With speed will haste, and shun this coming blow
Parma, farewell ; would I had never known thee,
Or aught of thine ! Well, young man, since no prayer
Can make thee safe, I leave thee to despair. [*Exit.*
GIO. : Despair, or tortures of a thousand hells,
All's one to me ; I have set up my rest.
Now, now, work serious thoughts on baneful plots ;
Be all a man, my soul ; let not the curse
Of old prescription rend from me the gall
Of courage, which enrolls a glorious death :
If I must totter like a well-grown oak,
Some under-shrubs shall in my weighty fall
Be crush'd to splits ; with me they all shall perish ! [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*A Hall in* SORANZO'S *House.*

Enter SORANZO, VASQUES *with Masks, and* BANDITTI.

SOR. : You will not fail, or shrink in the attempt ?

VAS. : I will undertake for their parts ; be sure, my masters, to be bloody enough, and as unmerciful as if you were preying upon a rich booty on the very mountains of Liguria : for your pardons, trust to my lord ; but for reward, you shall trust none but your own pockets.

BANDITTI : We'll make a murder.

SOR. : Here's gold,—(*Gives them money*)—here's more ; want nothing ; what you do
Is noble, and an act of brave revenge :
I'll make you rich, banditti, and all free.

OMNES. : Liberty ! liberty !

VAS. : Hold, take every man a vizard ; when you are withdrawn, keep as much silence as you can possibly. You know the watch-word, till which be spoken, move not ; but when you hear that, rush in like a stormy flood : I need not instruct you in your own profession.

OMNES. : No, no, no.

VAS. : In, then ; your ends are profit and preferment.—Away ! [*Exeunt* BAN.

SOR. : The guests will all come, Vasques ?

VAS. : Yes, sir. And now let me a little edge your resolution : you see nothing is unready to this great work, but a great mind in you ; call to your remembrance your disgraces, your loss of honour, Hippolita's blood, and arm your courage in your own wrongs ; so shall you best right those wrongs in vengeance, which you may truly call your own.

SOR. : 'Tis well ; the less I speak, the more I burn,
And blood shall quench that flame.

VAS. : Now you begin to turn Italian. This beside ; when my young incest-monger comes, he will be sharp set on his old bit : give him time enough, let him have your chamber and bed at liberty ; let my hot hare have law ere he be hunted to his death, that, if it be possible, he post to hell in the very act of his damnation.

SOR. : It shall be so ; and see, as we would wish,
He comes himself first—

Enter GIOVANNI.

Welcome, my much-lov'd brother ;
Now I perceive you honour me ; you are welcome—
But where's my father ?

GIO. : With the other states,
Attending on the nuncio of the pope,
To wait upon him hither. How's my sister ?

SOR. : Like a good housewife, scarcely ready yet ;
You were best walk to her chamber.

GIO. : If you will.

SOR. : I must expect my honourable friends ;
Good brother, get her forth.

GIO. : You are busy, sir. [*Exit.*

VAS. : Even as the great devil himself would have it ! let him go and glut himself in his own destruction—(*Flourish.*)—Hark, the nuncio is at hand ; good sir, be ready to receive him.

Enter CARDINAL, FLORIO, DONADO, RICHARDETTO, *and* ATTENDANTS.

SOR. : Most reverend lord, this grace hath made me proud,
That you vouchsafe my house ; I ever rest
Your humble servant for this noble favour.

CAR. : You are our friend, my lord ; his Holiness
Shall understand how zealously you honour

Saint Peter's vicar in his substitute :
Our special love to you.
SOR. : Signiors, to you
My welcome, and my ever best of thanks
For this so memorable courtesy.
Pleaseth your grace, walk near ?
CAR. : My lord, we come
To celebrate your feast with civil mirth,
As ancient custom teacheth : we will go.
SOR. : Attend his grace there. Signiors, keep your way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—ANNABELLA'S *Bed Chamber in the same.*

ANNABELLA, *richly dressed, and* GIOVANNI.

GIO. : What, chang'd so soon ! hath your new sprightly lord
Found out a trick in night-games more than we
Could know, in our simplicity ?—Ha ! is't so ?
Or does the fit come on you, to prove treacherous
To your past vows and oaths ?
ANN. : Why should you jest
At my calamity, without all sense
Of the approaching dangers you are in ?
GIO. : What dangers half so great as thy revolt ?
Thou art a faithless sister, else thou know'st,
Malice, or any treachery beside,
Would stoop to my bent brows ; why, I hold fate
Clasp'd in my fist, and could command the course
Of time's eternal motion, hadst thou been
One thought more steady than an ebbing sea.
And what ? you'll now be honest, that's resolv'd ?
ANN. : Brother, dear brother, know what I have been,
And know that now there's but a dining-time
'Twixt us and our confusion ; let's not waste
These precious hours in vain and useless speech.
Alas ! these gay attires were not put on
But to some end ; this sudden solemn feast
Was not ordain'd to riot in expense ;
I that have now been chamber'd here alone,
Barr'd of my guardian, or of any else,
Am not for nothing at an instant freed
To fresh access. Be not deceiv'd, my brother,
This banquet is an harbinger of death
To you and me ; resolve yourself it is,
And be prepared to welcome it.
GIO. : Well, then ;
The schoolmen teach that all this globe of earth
Shall be consumed to ashes in a minute.
ANN. : So I have read too.
GIO. : But 'twere somewhat strange
To see the waters burn ; could I believe
This might be true, I could believe as well
There might be hell or heaven.
ANN. : That's most certain.

GIO. : A dream, a dream ! else in this other world
We should know one another.
ANN. : So we shall.
GIO : Have you heard so ?
ANN. : For certain.
GIO. : But do you think,
That I shall see you there ? You look on me.—
May we kiss one another, prate, or laugh,
Or do as we do here ?
ANN. : I know not that ;
But—brother, for the present, what d'ye mean
To free yourself from danger ? some way think
How to escape ; I'm sure the guests are come.
GIO. : Look up, look here ; what see you in my face ?
ANN. : Distraction and a troubled conscience.
GIO. : Death, and a swift repining wrath :—yet look ;
What see you in mine eyes ?
ANN. : Methinks you weep.
GIO. : I do indeed ; these are the funeral tears
Shed on your grave ; these furrow'd up my cheeks
When first I lov'd and knew not how to woo.
Fair Annabella, should I here repeat
The story of my life, we might lose time.
Be record all the spirits of the air,
And all things else that are, that day and night,
Early and late, the tribute which my heart
Hath paid to Annabella's sacred love,
Hath been these tears, which are her mourners now !
Never till now did nature do her best,
To shew a matchless beauty to the world,
Which in an instant, ere it scarce was seen,
The jealous destinies required again.
Pray, Annabella, pray ! since we must part,
Go thou, white in thy soul, to fill a throne
Of innocence and sanctity in heaven.
Pray, pray, my sister !
ANN. : Then I see your drift—
Ye blessed angels guard me !
GIO. : So say I ;
Kiss me. If ever aftertimes should hear
Of our fast-knit affections, though perhaps
The laws of conscience and of civil use
May justly blame us, yet when they but know
Our loves, that love will wipe away that rigour,
Which would in other incests be abhorr'd.
Give me your hand : how sweetly life doth run
In these well-colour'd veins ! how constantly
These palms do promise health ! but I could chide
With nature for this cunning flattery—
Kiss me again—forgive me.
ANN. : With my heart.
GIO. : Farewell !
ANN. : Will you be gone ?

GIO. : Be dark, bright sun,
And make this mid-day night, that thy gilt rays
May not behold a deed, will turn their splendour
More sooty than the poets feign their Styx !
One other kiss, my sister.
ANN. : What means this ?
GIO. : To save thy fame, and kill thee in a kiss.

[*Stabs her.*

Thus die, and die by me, and by my hand !
Revenge is mine ; honour doth love command.
ANN. : Oh brother, by your hand !
GIO. : When thou art dead
I'll give my reasons for't ; for to dispute
With thy (even in thy death) most lovely beauty,
Would make me stagger to perform this act
Which I most glory in.
ANN. : Forgive him, Heaven—and me my sins ! farewell,
Brother unkind, unkind,—mercy, great Heaven oh—oh !

[*Dies.*

GIO. : She's dead, alas, good soul ! The hapless fruit
That in her womb receive its life from me,
Hath had from me a cradle and a grave.
I must not dally—this sad marriage-bed
In all her best, bore her alive and dead.
Soranzo, thou hast miss'd thy aim in this !
I have prevented now thy reaching plots,
And kill'd a love, for whose each drop of blood
I would have pawn'd my heart. Fair Annabella,
How over-glorious art thou in thy wounds,
Triumphing over infamy and hate !
Shrink not, courageous hand, stand up, my heart,
And boldly act my last, and greater part !

[*The scene closes.*

SCENE VI.—*A Banqueting Room in the same.*

A Banquet.—Enter the CARDINAL, FLORIO, DONADO, SORANZO, RICHARDETTO, VASQUES, *and* ATTENDANTS.

VAS. (*apart to* SOR.) : Remember, sir, what you have to do ; be wise and resolute.
SOR. : Enough—my heart is fix'd.—Pleaseth your grace
To taste these coarse confections : though the use
Of such set entertainments more consists
In custom, than in cause, yet, reverend sir,
I am still made your servant by your presence.
CAR. : And we your friend.
SOR. : But where's my brother Giovanni ?

Enter GIOVANNI, *with a heart upon his Dagger.*

GIO. : Here, here, Soranzo ! trimm'd in reeking blood,
That triumphs over death ! proud in the spoil
Of love and vengeance ! fate, or all the powers
That guide the motions of immortal souls,
Could not prevent me.

CAR. : What means this ?
FLO. : Son Giovanni !
SOR. : Shall I be forestall'd ? [*Aside.*
GIO. : Be not amazed : if your misgiving hearts
Shrink at an idle sight, what bloodless fear
Of coward passion would have seiz'd your senses,
Had you beheld the rape of life and beauty
Which I have acted ?—my sister, oh my sister !
FLO. : Ha ! what of her ?
GIO. : The glory of my deed
Darken'd the mid-day sun, made noon as night.
You came to feast, my lords, with dainty fare,
I came to feast too ; but I digg'd for food
In a much richer mine, than gold or stone
Of any value balanced ; 'tis a heart,
A heart, my lords, in which is mine entomb'd :
Look well upon't ; do you know it ?
VAS. : What strange riddle's this ? [*Aside.*
GIO. : 'Tis Annabella's heart, 'tis ; why do you startle ?
I vow 'tis hers ;—this dagger's point plough'd up
Her fruitful womb, and left to me the fame
Of a most glorious executioner.
FLO. : Why, madman, art thyself ?
GIO. : Yes, father, and, that times to come may know.
How, as my fate, I honour'd my revenge,
List, father ; to your ears I will yield up
How much I have deserv'd to be your son.
FLO. : What is't thou say'st ?
GIO. : Nine moons have had their changes,
Since I first thoroughly view'd, and truly lov'd,
Your daughter and my sister.
FLO. : How ? Alas, my lords,
He is a frantic madman !
GIO. : Father, no.
For nine months space, in secret, I enjoy'd
Sweet Annabella's sheets ; nine months I lived
A happy monarch of her heart and her ;
Soranzo, thou know'st this ; thy paler cheek
Bears the confounding print of thy disgrace
For her too fruitful womb too soon bewray'd
The happy passage of our stolen delights,
And made her mother to a child unborn.
CAR. : Incestuous villain !
FLO. : Oh, his rage belies him.
GIO. : It does not, 'tis the oracle of truth ;
I vow it is so.
SOR. : I shall burst with fury—
Bring the strumpet forth !
VAS. : I shall, sir. [*Exit.*
GIO. : Do, sir ; have you all no faith
To credit yet my triumphs ? here I swear
By all that you call sacred, by the love
I bore my Annabella whilst she lived,
These hands have from her bosom ripp'd this heart.

Re-enter VASQUES.

Is't true, or no, sir?
VAS. : 'Tis most strangely true.
FLO. : Cursed man—have I lived to—— [*Dies.*
CAR. : Hold up, Florio.
Monster of children! see what thou hast done,
Broke thy old father's heart! is none of you
Dares venture on him?
GIO. : Let them! O my father,
How well his death becomes him in his griefs!
Why this was done with courage; now survives
None of our house but I, gilt in the blood
Of a fair sister and a hapless father.
SOR. : Inhuman scorn of men, hast thou a thought
T' outlive thy murders? [*Draws.*
GIO. : Yes, I tell thee yes;
For in my fists I bear the twists of life.
Soranzo, see this heart, which was thy wife's;
Thus I exchange it royally for thine. [*They fight.*
And thus and thus! now brave revenge is mine. [SORANZO *falls.*
VAS. : I cannot hold any longer. You, sir, are you grown insolent in your butcheries? have at you.
GIO. : Come, I am arm'd to meet thee. [*They fight.*
VAS. : No! will it not be yet? if this will not, another shall. Not yet? I shall fit you anon——VENGEANCE!

The BANDITTI *rush in.*

GIO. : Welcome! come more of you; whate'er you be,
I dare your worst—— [*They surround and wound him.*
Oh I can stand no longer; feeble arms,
Have you so soon lost strength? [*Falls.*
VAS. : Now, you are *welcome*, sir!—Away, my masters, all is done; shift for yourselves, your reward is your own; shift for yourselves. [*Aside to* BAND.
BAND : Away, away! [*Exeunt.*
VAS. : How do you, my lord? See you this? (*pointing to* GIO.) how is't?
SOR. : Dead; but in death well pleas'd, that I have liv'd
To see my wrongs reveng'd on that black devil.—
O Vasques, to thy bosom let me give
My last of breath; let not that lecher live——
Oh!— [*Dies.*
VAS. : The reward of peace and rest be with [you], my ever dearest lord and master!
GIO. : Whose hand gave me this wound?
VAS. : Mine, sir; I was your first man; have you enough?
GIO. : I thank thee, thou hast done for me
But what I would have else done on myself.
Art sure thy lord is dead?
VAS. : Oh impudent slave!
As sure as I am sure to see thee die.
CAR. : Think on thy life and end, and call for mercy.
GIO. : Mercy? why, I have found it in this justice.
CAR. : Strive yet to cry to Heaven.
GIO. : Oh I bleed fast.
Death, thou'rt a guest long look'd for, I embrace

Thee and thy wounds ; oh, my last minute comes !
Where'er I go, let me enjoy this grace,
Freely to view my Annabella's face. [*Dies.*

DON. : Strange miracle of justice !

CAR. : Raise up the city, we shall be murder'd all !

VAS. : You need not fear, you shall not ; this strange task being ended, I have paid the duty to the son, which I have vowed to the father.

CAR. : Speak, wretched villain, what incarnate fiend
Hath led thee on to this ?

VAS. : Honesty, and pity of my master's wrongs : for know, my lord, I am by birth a Spaniard, brought forth my country in my youth by lord Soranzo's father ; whom, whilst he lived, I served faithfully ; since whose death I have been to this man, as I was to him. What I have done, was duty, and I repent nothing, but that the loss of my life had not ransomed his.

CAR. : Say, fellow, know'st thou any yet unnam'd
Of council in this incest ?

VAS. : Yes, an old woman, sometime guardian to this murder'd lady.

CAR. : And what's become of her ?

VAS. : Within this room she is ; whose eyes, after her confession, I caused to be put out, but kept alive, to confirm what from Giovanni's own mouth you have heard. Now, my lord, what I have done you may judge of ; and let your own wisdom be a judge in your own reason.

CAR. : Peace ! first this woman, chief in these effects,
My sentence is, that forthwith she be ta'en
Out of the city, for example's sake,
There to be burnt to ashes.

DON. : 'Tis most just.

CAR. : Be it your charge, Donado, see it done.

DON. : I shall.

VAS. : What for me ? if death, 'tis welcome ; I have been honest to the son, as I was to the father.

CAR. : Fellow, for thee, since what thou didst was done
Not for thyself, being no Italian,
We banish thee for ever ; to depart
Within three days : in this we do dispense
With grounds of reason, not of thine offence.

VAS. : 'Tis well ; this conquest is mine, and I rejoice that a Spaniard outwent an Italian in revenge. [*Exit.*

CAR. : Take up these slaughter'd bodies, see them buried ;
And all the gold and jewels, or whatsoever,
Confiscate by the canons of the church,
We seize upon to the Pope's proper use.

RICH. (*discovers himself*) : Your grace's pardon ; thus long I liv'd disguised,
To see the effect of pride and lust at once
Brought both to shameful ends.

CAR. : What ! Richardetto, whom we thought for dead ?

DON. : Sir, was it you——

RICH. : Your friend.

CAR. : We shall have time
To talk at large of all ; but never yet.
Incest and murder have so strangely met.
Of one so young, so rich in nature's store,
Who could not say, 'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE ? [*Exeunt.*

1682

VENICE PRESERVED
OR A PLOT DISCOVERED
(By THOMAS OTWAY)

After an interval of eighteen years, theatrical activity returned with the Restoration of Charles II. A further twenty-two years were to elapse before a great play made its appearance. Meanwhile there was much discussion as to how plays ought to be written. The French theatre had arisen, while the English lay dormant, and French dramatic models came into fashion, sponsored by a Court modelled on the French Court. According to their academic standards, Elizabethan drama was vulgar and formless. John Dryden, the poet laureate, whose word was law, set out to establish a new school, discarding blank verse in favour of the heroic couplet, and constructing his plays (like the pre-Kyd uninspired Elizabethans) according to the rules of Aristotle. The smart set duly went into ecstasies, but that sort of vogue never lasts long. In due course, Shakespeare and Jonson and Fletcher were re-discovered, and a new generation of dramatists paid homage to them in the practical form of emulating their art and spirit. Thomas Otway (1652–1685) was the most successful of these neo-Elizabethans, and *Venice Preserved* is generally accepted as a masterpiece. It had a certain topical interest, being produced in 1682, about the time of the so-called Popish Plot of Titus Oates. It remained popular for more than a hundred and fifty years.

Otway, faithful to the Elizabethan tradition, squandered his life, and, retiring to an obscure public house, escaped from his creditors, at the age of thirty-four.

VENICE PRESERVED
or, A Plot Discovered

Characters

DUKE OF VENICE
PRIULI, *Father to Belvidera, a Senator*
ANTONIO, *a Fine Speaker in the Senate*
JAFFEIR
PIERRE
RENAULT
BEDAMAR
SPINOSA
THEODORE
ELIOT
REVILLIDO
DURAND
MEZZANA
} *Conspirators*

BRAMVEIL
TERNON
BRABE
RETROSI
} *Conspirators*

BELVIDERA
AQUILINA
TWO WOMEN, *Attendants on Belvidera*
TWO WOMEN, *Servants to* AQUILINA
THE COUNCIL OF TEN
OFFICER
GUARDS
FRIAR
EXECUTIONER AND RABBLE

ACT I

SCENE I

Enter PRIULI *and* JAFFEIR.

PRIU. : No more ! I'll hear no more ; begone and leave.
JAFF. : Not hear me ! by my sufferings but you shall !
My lord, my lord ! I'm not that abject wretch

You think me : Patience ! where's the distance throws
Me back so far, but I may boldly speak
In right, though proud oppression will not hear me !
PRIU. : Have you not wrong'd me ?
JAFF. : Could my nature e'er
Have brook'd injustice or the doing wrongs,
I need not now thus low have bent myself
To gain a hearing from a cruel father !
Wronged you ?
PRIU. : Yes ! wronged me, in the nicest point :
The honour of my house ; you have done me wrong ;
You may remember (for I now will speak,
And urge its baseness) : when you first came home
From travel, with such hopes, as made you looked on
By all men's eyes, a youth of expectation ;
Pleased with your growing virtue, I received you :
Courted, and sought to raise you to your merits :
My house, my table, nay my fortune too,
My very self, was yours ; you might have used me
To your best service ; like an open friend,
I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine ;
When in requital of my best endeavours,
You treacherously practised to undo me,
Seduced the weakness of my age's darling,
My only child, and stole her from my bosom :
O Belvidera !
JAFF. : 'Tis to me you owe her,
Childless you had been else, and in the grave,
Your name extinct, nor no more Priuli heard of.
You may remember, scarce five years are past,
Since in your brigandine you sailed to see
The Adriatic wedded by our Duke,
And I was with you : your unskilful pilot
Dashed us upon a rock ; when to your boat
You made for safety ; entered first yourself ;
The affrighted Belvidera following next,
As she stood trembling on the vessel side,
Was by a wave washed off into the deep,
When instantly I plunged into the sea,
And buffeting the billows to her rescue,
Redeemed her life with half the loss of mine :
Like a rich conquest in one hand I bore her,
And with the other dashed the saucy waves,
That thronged and pressed to rob me of my prize :
I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms :
Indeed you thanked me ; but a nobler gratitude
Rose in her soul : for from that hour she loved me,
Till for her life she paid me with herself.
PRIU. : You stole her from me, like a thief you stole her,
At dead of night ; that curséd hour you chose
To rifle me of all my heart held dear.
May all your joys in her prove false like mine ;
A sterile fortune, and a barren bed,
Attend you both ; continual discord make

Your days and nights bitter and grievous : still
May the hard hand of a vexatious need
Oppress, and grind you ; till at last you find
The curse of disobedience all your portion.

JAFF. : Half of your curse you have bestowed in vain,
Heaven has already crowned our faithful loves
With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty.
May he live to prove more gentle than his grandsire,
And happier than his father !

PRIU. : Rather live
To bait thee for his bread, and din your ears
With hungry cries : whilst his unhappy mother
Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.

JAFF. : You talk as if 'twould please you.

PRIU. : 'Twould by Heaven.
Once she was dear indeed ; the drops that fell
From my sad heart, when she forgot her duty,
The fountain of my life was not so precious :
But she is gone, and if I am a man
I will forget her.

JAFF. : Would I were in my grave !

PRIU. : And she too with thee ;
For, living here, you're but my cursed remembrancers
I once was happy.

JAFF. : You use me thus, because you know my soul
Is fond of Belvidera : you perceive
My life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me ;
Oh ! could my soul ever have known satiety :
Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me,
But I might send her back to you with contumely,
And court my fortune where she would be kinder !

PRIU. : You dare not do't——

JAFF. : Indeed, my lord, I dare not.
My heart that awes me is too much my master :
Three years are past since first our vows were plighted,
During which time the world must bear me witness,
I have treated Belvidera like your daughter,
The daughter of a senator of Venice ;
Distinction, place, attendance, and observance,
Due to her birth, she always has commanded ;
Out of my little fortune I have done this ;
Because (though hopeless e'er to win your nature)
The world might see, I loved her for herself,
Not as the heiress of the great Priuli——

PRIU : No more !

JAFF. : Yes ! all, and then adieu for ever.
There's not a wretch that lives on common charity
But's happier than me : for I have known
The luscious sweets of plenty ; every night
Have slept with soft contentment about my head,
And never waked but to a joyful morning ;
Yet now must fall like a full ear of corn,
Whose blossom scaped, yet's withered in the ripening.

PRIU. : Home and be humble, study to retrench ;
Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,
Those pageants of thy folly,
Reduce the glittering trappings of thy wife
To humble weeds, fit for thy little state ;
Then to some suburb cottage both retire ;
Drudge, to feed loathsome life : get brats, and starve——
Home, home, I say.—— [*Exit* PRIULI.

JAFF. : Yes, if my heart would let me—
This proud, this swelling heart : home I would go,
But that my doors are hateful to my eyes,
Filled and dammed up with gaping creditors,
Watchful as fowlers when their game will spring ;
I have now not fifty ducats in the world,
Yet still I am in love, and pleased with ruin.
O Belvidera ! oh, she is my wife—
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.

Enter PIERRE.

PIERR. : My friend, good morrow !
How fares the honest partner of my heart ?
What melancholy ! not a word to spare me ?

JAFF. : I'm thinking, Pierre, how that damned starving quality
Called Honesty got footing in the world.

PIERR. : Why, powerful Villainy first set it up,
For its own ease and safety : honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten : were all mankind villains,
They'd starve each other ; lawyers would want practice,
Cut-throats rewards : each man would kill his brother
Himself, none would be paid or hanged for murder :
Honesty was a cheat invented first
To bind the hands of bold deserving rogues,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontrolled above their betters.

JAFF. : Then Honesty is but a notion.

PIERR. : Nothing else,
Like wit, much talked of, not to be defined :
He that pretends to most, too, has least share in't ;
'Tis a ragged virtue : Honesty ! no more on't.

JAFF. : Sure thou art honest ?

PIERR. : So indeed men think me ?
But they're mistaken Jaffeir ; I am a rogue
As well as they ;
A fine gay bold-faced villain, as thou seest me ;
'Tis true, I pay my debts when they're contracted ;
I steal from no man ; would not cut a throat
To gain admission to a great man's purse,
Or a whore's bed ; I'd not betray my friend,
To get his place or fortune : I scorn to flatter
A blown-up fool above me, or crush the wretch beneath me,
Yet, Jaffeir, for all this, I am a villain !

JAFF. : A villain——

PIERR. : Yes, a most notorious villain :
To see the suff'rings of my fellow-creatures,
And own myself a man : to see our senators
Cheat the deluded people with a show
Of Liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of ;
They say, by them our hands are free from fetters,
Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds ;
Bring whom they please to Infamy and Sorrow ;
Drive us like wracks down the rough tide of power,
Whilst no hold's left to save us from destruction ;
All that bear this are villains ; and I one,
Not to rouse up at the great call of nature,
And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,
That makes us slaves and tells us 'tis our charter.

JAFF. : O Aquilina ! Friend, to lose such beauty,
The dearest purchase of thy noble labours ;
She was thy right by conquest, as by love.

PIERR. : O Jaffeir ! I'd so fixed my heart upon her,
That wheresoe'er I framed a scheme of life
For time to come, she was my only joy
With which I wished to sweeten future cares ;
I fancied pleasures, none but one that loves
And dotes as I did can imagine like 'em :
When in the extremity of all these hopes,
In the most charming hour of expectation,
Then when our eager wishes soar the highest,
Ready to stoop and grasp the lovely game,
A haggard owl, a worthless kite of prey,
With his foul wings sailed in and spoiled my quarry.

JAFF. : I know the wretch, and scorn him as thou hat'st him.

PIERR. : Curse on the common good that's so protected !
Where every slave that heaps up wealth enough
To do much wrong, becomes a lord of right :
I, who believed no ill could e'er come near me,
Found in the embraces of my Aquilina
A wretched old but itching senator ;
A wealthy fool, that had bought out my title,
A rogue that uses beauty like a lambskin,
Barely to keep him warm : that filthy cuckoo too
Was in my absence crept into my nest,
And spoiling all my brood of noble pleasure.

JAFF. : Didst thou not chase him thence ?

PIERR. : I did, and drove
The rank old bearded Hirco stinking home :
The matter was complained of in the Senate,
I summoned to appear, and censured basely,
For violating something they call privilege—
This was the recompense of my service :
Would I'd been rather beaten by a coward !
A soldier's mistress Jaffeir's his religion,
When that's profaned, all other ties are broken
That even dissolves all former bonds of service,
And from that hour I think myself as free

To be the foe as e'er the friend of Venice.—
Nay, dear Revenge, whene'er thou call'st I'm ready.
JAFF. : I think no safety can be here for virtue,
And grieve, my friend, as much as thou to live
In such a wretched state as this of Venice ;
Where all agree to spoil the public good,
And villains fatten with the brave man's labours.
PIERR. : We have neither safety, unity, nor peace,
For the foundation's lost of common good,
Justice is lame as well as blind amongst us ;
The laws (corrupted to their ends that make 'em)
Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,
That every day starts up to enslave us deeper :
Now could this glorious cause but find out friends
To do it right ! O Jaffeir ! then might'st thou
Not wear these seals of woe upon thy face,
The proud Priuli should be taught humanity,
And learn to value such a son as thou art.
I dare not speak ! But my heart bleeds this moment !
JAFF. : Cursed be the cause, though I thy friend be part on't :
Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,
For I am used to misery, and perhaps
May find a way to sweeten 't to thy spirit.
PIERR. : Too soon it will reach thy knowledge——
JAFF. : Then from thee
Let it proceed. There's virtue in thy friendship
Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
Strengthen my constancy, and welcome ruin.
PIERR. : Then thou art ruined !
JAFF. : That I long since knew,
I and ill-fortune have been long acquaintance.
PIERR. : I passed this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains ;
The sons of public rapine were destroying :
They told me, by the sentence of the law
They had commission to seize all thy fortune,
Nay more, Priuli's cruel hand hath signed it.
Here stood a ruffian with a horrid face
Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,
Tumbled into a heap for public sale :
There was another making villainous jests
At thy undoing ; he had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient most domestic ornaments,
Rich hangings, intermixed and wrought with gold ;
The very bed, which on thy wedding night
Received thee to the arms of Belvidera,
The scene of all thy joys, was violated
By the coarse hands of filthy dungeon villains,
And thrown amongst the common lumber.
JAFF. : Now, thanks Heaven——
PIERR. : Thank Heaven ! for what ?
JAFF. : That I am not worth a ducat.
PIERR. : Curse thy dull stars, and the worse fate of Venice,
Where brothers, friends, and fathers, all are false ;

Where there's no trust, no truth ; where Innocence
Stoops under vile Oppression, and Vice lords it :
Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how at last
Thy beauteous Belvidera, like a wretch
That's doomed to banishment, came weeping forth,
Shining through tears, like April suns in showers
That labour to o'ercome the cloud that loads 'em,
Whilst two young virgins, on whose arms she leaned,
Kindly looked up, and at her grief grew sad,
As if they catched the sorrows that fell from her :
Even the lewd rabble that were gathered round
To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her ;
Governed their roaring throats and grumbled pity :
I could have hugged the greasy rogues : they pleased me.

JAFF. : I thank thee for this story, from my soul,
Since now I know the worst that can befall me :
Ah, Pierre ! I have a heart, that could have borne
The roughest wrong my fortune could have done me :
But when I think what Belvidera feels,
The bitterness her tender spirit tastes of,
I own myself a coward : bear my weakness,
If throwing thus my arms about thy neck,
I play the boy, and blubber in thy bosom.
Oh ! I shall drown thee with my sorrows !

PIERR. : Burn !
First burn, and level Venice to thy ruin.
What ! starve like beggars' brats in frosty weather,
Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death !
Thou, or thy cause, shall never want assistance,
Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee ;
Command my heart : thou art every way its master.

JAFF. : No : there's a secret pride in bravely dying.

PIERR. : Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run mad ;
Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow :
Revenge ! the attribute of gods, they stamped it
With their great image on our natures ; die !
Consider well the cause that calls upon thee ;
And if thou'rt base enough, die then : remember
Thy Belvidera suffers : Belvidera !
Die !—damn first !—what ! be decently interred
In a churchyard, and mingle thy brave dust
With stinking rogues that rot in dirty winding-sheets,
Surfeit-slain fools, the common dung o' th' soil.

JAFF. : Oh !

PIERR. : Well said, out with't, swear a little——

JAFF. : Swear !
By sea and air ! by earth, by heaven and hell,
I will revenge my Belvidera's tears !
Hark thee, my friend—Priuli—is—a Senator !

PIERR. : A dog !

JAFF. : Agreed.

PIERR. : Shoot him.

JAFF. : With all my heart.
No more : where shall we meet at night ?

PIERR. : I'll tell thee ;
On the *Rialto* every night at twelve
I take my evening's walk of meditation,
There we two will meet, and talk of precious
Mischief——
JAFF. : Farewell.
PIERR. : At twelve.
JAFF. : At any hour, my plagues
Will keep me waking. [*Exit* PIERRE.
Tell me why, good Heaven,
Thou mad'st me what I am, with all the spirit,
Aspiring thoughts and elegant desires
That fill the happiest man ? Ah ! rather why
Didst thou not form me sordid as my fate,
Base-minded, dull, and fit to carry burdens ?
Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me ?
Is this just dealing, Nature ? Belvidera !

Enter BELVIDERA.

Poor Belvidera !
BELV. : Lead me, lead me, my virgins !
To that kind voice. My lord, my love, my refuge !
Happy my eyes, when they behold thy face :
My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating
At sight of thee, and bound with sprightful joys.
O smile, as when our loves were in their spring,
And cheer my fainting soul.
JAFF. : As when our loves
Were in their spring ? has then my fortune changed ?
Art thou not Belvidera, still the same,
Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found thee ?
If thou art altered, where shall I have harbour ?
Where ease my loaded heart ? Oh ! where complain ?
BELV. : Does this appear like change, or love decaying ?
When thus I throw myself into thy bosom,
With all the resolution of a strong truth :
Beats not my heart, as 'twould alarum thine
To a new charge of bliss ; I joy more in thee,
Than did thy mother when she hugged thee first,
And blessed the gods for all her travail past.
JAFF. : Can there in women be such glorious faith ?
Sure all ill-stories of thy sex are false :
O woman ! lovely woman ! Nature made thee
To temper man : we had been brutes without you :
Angels are painted fair, to look like you ;
There's in you all that we believe of heaven,
Amazing brightness, purity and truth,
Eternal joy, and everlasting love.
BELV. : If love be treasure, we'll be wondrous rich ;
I have so much, my heart will surely break with 't ;
Vows cannot express it ; when I would declare
How great's my joy, I am dumb with the big thought ;
I swell and sigh, and labour with my longing.
O lead me to some desert wide and wild,

Barren as our misfortunes, where my soul
May have its vent : where I may tell aloud
To the high heavens, and ever list'ning planet,
With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught !
Where I may throw my eager arms about thee,
Give loose to love with kisses, kindling joy,
And let off all the fire that's in my heart.

JAFF. : O Belvidera ! double I'm a beggar,
Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee ;
Want ! worldly Want ! that hungry meagre fiend
Is at my heels, and chases me in view ;
Canst thou bear cold and hunger ? can these limbs,
Framed for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty ?
When banished by our miseries abroad
(As suddenly we shall be), to seek out
(In some far climate where our names are strangers)
For charitable succour ; wilt thou then,
When in a bed of straw we shrink together,
And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads,
Wilt thou then talk thus to me ? Wilt thou then
Hush my cares thus, and shelter me with love ?

BELV. : Oh, I will love thee, even in madness love thee.
Though my distracted senses should forsake me,
I'd find some intervals, when my poor heart
Should 'suage itself and be let loose to thine.
Though the bare earth be all our resting-place,
Its roots our food, some clift our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thy head ;
As thou sighing liest, and swelled with sorrow,
Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest ;
Then praise our God, and watch thee till the morning.

JAFF. : Hear this, you heavens, and wonder how you made her !
Reign, reign, ye monarchs that divide the world,
Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
Tranquillity and happiness like mine ;
Like gaudy ships, th' obsequious billows fall
And rise again, to lift you in your pride ;
They wait but for a storm and then devour you :
I, in my private bark, already wrecked,
Like a poor merchant driven on unknown land,
That had by chance packed up his choicest treasure
In one dear casket, and saved only that :
Since I must wander further on the shore,
Thus hug my little, but my precious store ;
Resolved to scorn, and trust my fate no more. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I

Enter PIERRE *and* AQUILINA.

AQUIL. : By all thy wrongs, thou'rt dearer to my arms

Than all the wealth of Venice : prithee stay,
And let us love to-night.
PIERR. : No : there's fool,
There's fool about thee : when a woman sells
Her flesh to fools, her beauty's lost to me ;
They leave a taint, a sully where they've past,
There's such a baneful quality about 'em,
E'en spoils complexions with their own nauseousness.
They infect all they touch ; I cannot think
Of tasting anything a fool has palled.
AQUIL. : I loathe and scorn that fool thou mean'st, as much
Or more than thou canst ; but the beast has gold
That makes him necessary : power too,
To qualify my character, and poise me
Equal with peevish virtue, that beholds
My liberty with envy : in their hearts
Are loose as I am ; but an ugly power
Sits in their faces, and frights pleasures from 'em.
PIERR. : Much good may't do you, madam, with you Senator.
AQUIL. : My Senator ! why, canst thou think that wretch
E'er filled thy Aquilina's arms with pleasure ?
Think'st thou, because I sometimes give him leave
To foil himself at what he is unfit for ;
Because I force myself to endure and suffer him,
Think'st thou I love him ? No, by all the joys
Thou ever gav'st me, his presence is my penance ;
The worst thing an old man can be's a lover,
A mere *memento mori* to poor woman.
I never lay by his decrepit side,
But all that night I pondered on my grave.
PIERR. : Would he were well sent thither !
AQUIL. : That's my wish too :
For then, my Pierre, I might have cause with pleasure
To play the hypocrite : oh ! how I could weep
Over the dying dotard, and kiss him too,
In hopes to smother him quite ; then, when the time
Was come to pay my sorrows at his funeral,
For he's already made me heir to treasures,
Would make me out-act a real widow's whining :
How could I frame my face to fit my mourning,
With wringing hands attend him to his grave,
Fall swooning on his hearse : take mad possession
Even of the dismal vault where he lay buried,
There like the Ephesian matron dwell, till thou,
My lovely soldier, com'st to my deliverance ;
Then throwing up my veil, with open arms
And laughing eyes, run to new-dawning joy.
PIERR. : No more ! I have friends to meet me here to-night,
And must be private. As you prize my friendship
Keep up your coxcomb : let him not pry nor listen
Nor fisk about the house as I have seen him,
Like a tame mumping squirrel with a bell on ;
Curs will be abroad to bite him if you do.
AQUIL. : What friends to meet ? may I not be of your council ?

PIERR. : How ! a woman ask questions out of bed ?
Go to your Senator, ask him what passes
Amongst his brethren, he'll hide nothing from you ;
But pump not me for politics. No more !
Give order that whoever in my name
Comes here, receive admittance : so good-night.
AQUIL. : Must we ne'er meet again ! Embrace no more !
Is love so soon and utterly forgotten !
PIERR. : As you henceforward treat your fool, I'll think on't.
AQUIL. : Curst be all fools, and doubly curst myself,
The worst of fools—I die if he forsakes me ;
And now to keep him, heaven or hell instruct me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Rialto.*

Enter JAFFEIR.

JAFF. : I am here, and thus, the shades of night around me,
I look as if all hell were in my heart,
And I in hell. Nay surely, 'tis so with me ;—
For every step I tread, methinks some fiend
Knocks at my breast, and bids it not be quiet :
I've heard, how desperate wretches, like myself,
Have wandered out at this dead time of night
To meet the foe of mankind in his walk :
Sure I'm so curst, that, tho' of Heaven forsaken,
No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
Hell ! hell ! why sleepest thou ?

Enter PIERRE.

PIERR. : Sure I have stayed too long :
The clock has struck, and I may lose my proselyte.
Speak, who goes there ?
JAFF. : A dog, that comes to howl
At yonder moon : what's he that asks the question ?
PIERR. : A friend to dogs, for they are honest creatures
And ne'er betray their masters ; never fawn
On any that they love not : well met, friend :
Jaffier !
JAFF. : The same. O Pierre ! thou art come in season,
I was just going to pray.
PIERR. : Ah, that's mechanic,
Priests make a trade on't, and yet starve by it too :
No praying, it spoils business, and time's precious ;
Where's Belvidera ?
JAFF. : For a day or two
I've lodged her privately, till I see further
What fortune will do with me ? Prithee, friend,
If thou wouldst have me fit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of Belvidera——
PIERR. : Speak not of her.
JAFF. : Oh no !
PIERR. : Nor name her. May be I wish her well.
JAFF. : Who well ?

PIERR. : Thy wife, thy lovely Belvidera ;
I hope a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done !
JAFF. : Y' are merry, Pierre !
PIERR. : I am so :
Thou shalt smile too, and Belvidera smile ;
We'll all rejoice ; here's something to buy pins,
Marriage is chargeable.
JAFF. : I but half wished
To see the Devil, and he's here already.
Well !
What must this buy, rebellion, murder, treason ?
Tell me which way I must be damned for this.
PIERR. : When last we parted, we had no qualms like these,
But entertained each other's thoughts like men,
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world
Reformed since our last meeting ? what new miracles
Have happened ? has Priuli's heart relented ?
Can he be honest ?
JAFF. : Kind Heaven ! let heavy curses
Gall his old age ; cramps, aches, rack his bones,
And bitterest disquiet wring his heart ;
Oh, let him live till life become his burden !
Let him groan under't long, linger an age
In the worst agonies and pangs of death,
And find its ease, but late.
PIERR. : Nay, couldst thou not
As well, my friend, have stretched the curse to all
The Senate round, as to one single villain ?
JAFF. : But curses stick not : could I kill with cursing,
By Heaven ! I know not thirty heads in Venice
Should not be blasted ; Senators should rot
Like dogs on dunghills ; but their wives and daughters
Die of their own diseases. Oh, for a curse
To kill with !
PIERR. : Daggers, daggers are much better !
JAFF. : Ha !
PIERR. : Daggers.
JAFF. : But where are they ?
PIERR. : Oh, a thousand
May be disposed in honest hands in Venice.
JAFF. : Thou talk'st in clouds.
PIERR. : But yet a heart half wronged
As thine has been, would find the meaning, Jaffeir.
JAFF. : A thousand daggers, all in honest hands ;
And have not I a friend will stick one here ?
PIERR. : Yes, if I thought thou wert not to be cherished
To a nobler purpose, I'd be that friend.
But thou hast better friends, friends whom thy wrongs
Have made thy friends ; friends worthy to be called so ;
I'll trust thee with a secret : there are spirits
This hour at work. But as thou art a man,
Whom I have picked and chosen from the world,
Swear, that thou wilt be true to what I utter,

And when I have told thee, that which only gods
And men like gods are privy to, then swear,
No chance or change shall wrest it from my bosom.

JAFF. : When thou wouldst bind me, is there need of oaths ?
(Greensickness girls lose maidenheads with such counters)
For thou'rt so near my heart, that thou mayst see
Its bottom, sound its strength, and firmness to thee :
Is coward, fool, or villain, in my face ?
If I seem none of these, I dare believe
Thou wouldst not use me in a little cause,
For I am fit for honour's toughest task ;
Nor ever yet found fooling was my province ;
And for a villainous inglorious enterprise,
I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
Before thee, set it to what point thou wilt.

PIERR. : Nay, its cause thou wilt be fond of, Jaffeir.
For it is founded on the noblest basis,
Our liberties, our natural inheritance ;
There's no religion, no hypocrisy in't ;
We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray for't :
Openly act a deed, the world shall gaze
With wonder at, and envy when it's done.

JAFF. : For liberty !

PIERR. : For liberty, my friend !
Thou shalt be freed from base Priuli's tyranny,
And thy sequestered fortunes healed again.
I shall be freed from opprobrious wrongs,
That press me now, and bend my spirit downward :
All Venice free, and every growing merit
Succeed to its just right : fools shall be pulled
From Wisdom's seat ; those baleful unclean birds,
Those lazy owls, who (perched near Fortune's top)
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledged virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious.

JAFF. : What can I do ?

PIERR. : Canst thou not kill a Senator ?

JAFF. : Were there one wise or honest, I could kill him
For herding with that nest of fools and knaves ;
By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
Were to be had, and the brave story warms me.

PIERR. : Swear, then !

JAFF. : I do, by all those glittering stars
And yond great ruling planet of the night !
By all good powers above, and ill below !
By love and friendship, dearer than my life !
No power or death shall make me false to thee.

PIERR. : Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my heart.
A council's held hard by, where the destruction
Of this great Empire's hatching : there I'll lead thee !
But be a man, for thou'rt to mix with men
Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when it's wildest——

JAFF. : I give thee thanks
For this kind warning : yes, I will be a man,
And charge thee, Pierre, whene'er thou seest my fears
Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
Out of my breast, and show it for a coward's.
Come, let's begone, for from this hour I chase
All little thoughts, all tender human follies
Out of my bosom : vengeance shall have room :
Revenge !

PIERR. : And liberty !

JAFF. : Revenge ! revenge ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Scene changes to* AQUILINA'S *house, the Greek Courtesan.*

Enter RENAULT.

RENAULT : Why was my choice ambition, the first ground
A wretch can build on ? it's indeed at distance
A good prospect, tempting to the view,
The height delights us, and the mountain top
Looks beautiful, because it's nigh to heaven,
But we ne'er think how sandy's the foundation,
What storm will batter, and what tempest shake us !
Who's there ?

Enter SPINOSA.

SPIN. : Renault, good morrow ! for by this time
I think the scale of night has turned the balance,
And weighs up morning : has the clock struck twelve ?

REN. : Yes, clocks will go as they are set. But Man,
Irregular Man's ne'er constant, never certain :
I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness
In waiting dull attendance ; 'tis the curse
Of diligent virtue to be mixed like mine,
With giddy tempers, souls but half resolved.

SPIN. : Hell seize that soul amongst us, it can frighten !

REN. : What's then the cause that I am here alone ?
Why are we not together ?

Enter ELIOT.

O sir, welcome !
You are an Englishman : when treason's hatching
One might have thought you'd not have been behindhand.
In what whore's lap have you been lolling ?
Give but an Englishman his whore and ease,
Beef and sea-coal fire, he's yours for ever.

ELIOT : Frenchman, you are saucy.

REN. : How !

Enter BEDAMAR *the Ambassador*, THEODORE, BRAMVEIL, DURAND, BRABE, REVILLIDO, MEZZANA, TERNON, RETROSI, *Conspirators.*

BEDA. : At difference, fie !
Is this a time for quarrels ? Thieves and rogues
Fall out and brawl : should men of your high calling,
Men separated by the choice of Providence,
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here

In this great assembly as in one great jewel,
To adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smiled on,
Should you like boys wrangle for trifles?

REN. : Boys!

BEDA. : Renault, thy hand!

REN. : I thought I'd given my heart
Long since to every man that mingles here;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my froward age its weakness.

BEDA. : Eliot, thou once hadst virtue; I had seen
Thy stubborn temper bend with godlike goodness,
Not half thus courted: 'tis thy nation's glory,
To hug the foe that offers brave alliance.
Once more embrace, my friends—we'll all embrace—
United thus, we are the mighty engine
Must twist this rooted Empire from its basis!
Totters it not already?

ELIOT : Would it were tumbling!

BEDA. : Nay, it shall down: this night we seal its ruin.

Enter PIERRE.

O Pierre! thou art welcome!
Come to my breast, for by its hopes thou look'st
Lovelily dreadful, and the fate of Venice
Seems on thy sword already. O my Mars!
The poets that first feigned a god of war
Sure prophesied of thee.

PIERR. : Friends! was not Brutus
(I mean that Brutus who in open senate
Stabbed the first Cæsar that usurped the world)
A gallant man?

REN. : Yes, and Catiline too;
Though story wrong his fame: for he conspired
To prop the reeling glory of his country:
His cause was good.

BEDA. : And ours as much above it,
As Renault thou art superior to Cethegus,
Or Pierre to Cassius.

PIERR. : Then to what we aim at
When do we start? or must we talk for ever?

BEDA. : No, Pierre, the deed's near birth: Fate seems to have set
The business up, and given it to our care;
I hope there's not a heart nor hand amongst us
But is firm and ready.

ALL : All!
We'll die with Bedamar.

BEDA. : O men,
Matchless, as will your glory be hereafter.
The game is for a matchless prize, if won;
If lost, disgraceful ruin.

REN. : What can lose it?
The public stock's a beggar; one Venetian
Trusts not another: look into their stores
Of general safety; empty magazines,

A tattered fleet, a murmuring unpaid army,
Bankrupt nobility, a harassed commonalty,
A factious, giddy, and divided Senate,
Is all the strength of Venice : let's destroy it ;
Let's fill their magazines with arms to awe them,
Man out their fleet, and make their trade maintain it ;
Let loose the murmuring army on their masters,
To pay themselves with plunder ; lop their nobles
To the base roots, whence most of 'em first sprung ;
Enslave the rout, whom smarting will make humble ;
Turn out their droning Senate, and possess
That seat of empire which our souls were framed for.

PIERR. : Ten thousand men are armed at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world ;
This wretched state has starved them in its service,
And by your bounty quickened, they're resolved
To serve your glory, and revenge their own !
They've all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for th' alarm, and grumble 'tis so tardy.

BEDA. : I doubt not, friend, but thy unwearied diligence
Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease ;
After this night it is resolved we meet
No more, till Venice own us for her lords.

PIERR. : How lovely the Adriatic whore,
Dressed in her flames, will shine ! devouring flames !
Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom
And hiss in her foundation.

BEDA. : Now if any
Amongst us that owns this glorious cause,
Have friends or interest, he'd wish to save,
Let it be told, the general doom is sealed ;
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.

PIERR. : I must confess you there have touched my weakness,
I have a friend ; hear it, such a friend !
My heart was ne'er shut to him : nay, I'll tell you,
He knows the very business of this hour ;
But he rejoices in the cause, and loves it,
We've changed a vow to live and die together,
And he's at hand to ratify it here.

REN. : How ! all betrayed ?

PIERR. : No—I've dealt nobly with you ;
I've brought my all into the public stock ;
I had but one friend, and him I'll share amongst you !
Receive and cherish him : or if, when seen
And searched, you find him worthless, as my tongue
Has lodged this secret in his faithful breast,
To ease your fears I wear a dagger here
Shall rip it out again, and give you rest.
Come forth, thou only good I e'er could boast of.

Enter JAFFEIR *with a Dagger.*

BEDA. : His presence bears the show of manly virtue.

JAFF. : I know you'll wonder all, that thus uncalled,
I dare approach this place of fatal counsels ;
But I'm amongst you, and by Heaven it glads me,
To see so many virtues thus united,
To restore justice and dethrone oppression.
Command this sword, if you would have it quiet,
Into this breast ; but if you think it worthy
To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,
Send me into the cursed assembled Senate ;
It shrinks not, though I meet a father there ;
Would you behold this city flaming ? Here's
A hand shall bear a lighted torch at noon
To the Arsenal, and set its gates on fire.
REN. : You talk this well, sir.
JAFF. : Nay—by Heaven I'll do this.
Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces ;
You fear me a villain, and indeed it's odd
To hear a stranger talk thus at first meeting,
Of matters, that have been so well debated ;
But I come ripe with wrongs as you with counsels,
I hate this Senate, am a foe to Venice ;
A friend to none, but men resolved like me,
To push on mischief ; oh, did you but know me,
I need not talk thus !
BEDA. : Pierre ! I must embrace him,
My heart beats to this man as if it knew him.
REN. : I never lov'd these huggers.
JAFF. : Still I see
The cause delights me not. Your friends survey me,
As I were dangerous—but I come armed
Against all doubt, and to your trust will give
A pledge, worth more than all the world can pay for.
My Belvidera ! Ho ! My Belvidera !
BEDA. : What wonder next ?
JAFF. : Let me entreat you,
As I have henceforth hopes to call ye friends,
That all but the ambassador, [and] this
Grave guide of councils, with my friend that owns me,
Withdraw a while to spare a woman's blushes.
[*Exeunt all but* BEDAMAR, RENAULT, JAFFEIR, PIERRE.
BEDA. : Pierre, whither will this ceremony lead us ?
JAFF. : My Belvidera ! ho ! my Belvidera !

Enter BELVIDERA.

BELV. : Who calls so loud at this late peaceful hour ?
That voice was wont to come in gentler whispers,
And fill my ears with the soft breath of love :
Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where art thou ?
JAFF. : Indeed 'tis late.
BELV. : Oh ! I have slept and dreamt,
And dreamt again : where hast thou been, thou loiterer ?
Tho' my eyes closed, my arms have still been opened ;
Stretched every way betwixt my broken slumbers,
To search if thou wert come to crown my rest ;

There's no repose without thee : Oh, the day
Too soon will break, and wake us to our sorrow ;
Come, come to bed, and bid thy cares good-night.
JAFF. : O Belvidera ! we must change the scene
In which the past delights of life were tasted :
The poor sleep little, we must learn to watch
Our labours late, and early every morning,
Midst winter frosts ; then clad and fed with sparing,
Rise to our toils, and drudge away the day.
BELV. : Alas ! where am I ! whither is't you lead me !
Methinks I read distraction in your face !
Something less gentle than the fate you tell me :
You shake and tremble too ! your blood runs cold !
Heavens guard my love, and bless his heart with patience.
JAFF. : That I have patience, let our fate bear witness,
Who has ordained it so, that thou and I,
(Thou the divinest Good man e'er possessed,
And I the wretched'st of the race of man)
This very hour, without one tear, must part.
BELV. : Part ! must we part ? Oh ! am I then forsaken ?
Will my love cast me off ? have my misfortunes
Offended him so highly, that he'll leave me ?
Why drag you from me ; whither are you going ?
My dear ! my life ! my love !
JAFF. : O friends !
BELV. : Speak to me.
JAFF. : Take her from my heart ;
She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
I charge thee take her, but with tender'st care
Relieve her troubles and assuage her sorrows.
REN. : Rise, madam ! and command amongst your servants !
JAFF. : To you, sirs, and your honours, I bequeath her,
And with her this, when I prove unworthy— [*Gives a dagger.*
You know the rest :—then strike it to her heart ;
And tell her, he, who three whole happy years
Lay in her arms, and each kind night repeated
The passionate vows of still-increasing love,
Sent that reward for all her truth and sufferings.
BELV. : Nay, take my life, since he has sold it cheaply ;
Or send me to some distant clime your slave,
But let it be far off, lest my complainings
Should reach his guilty ears, and shake his peace.
JAFF. : No, Belvidera, I've contrived thy honour.
Trust to my faith, and be but fortune kind
To me, as I'll preserve that faith unbroken,
When next we meet, I'll lift thee to a height,
Shall gather all the gazing world about thee,
To wonder what strange virtue placed thee there.
But if we ne'er meet more——
BELV. : O thou unkind one,
Never meet more ? have I deserved this from you ?
Look on me, tell me, speak, thou dear deceiver,
Why am I separated from thy love ?
If I am false, accuse me ; but if true,

Don't prithee, don't in poverty forsake me,
But pity the sad heart, that's torn with parting.
Yet hear me ! yet recall me——

[*Exeunt* RENAULT, BEDAMAR, *and* BELVIDERA.

JAFF. : O my eyes !
Look not that way, but turn yourselves awhile
Into my heart, and be wean'd all together.
My friend, where art thou ?

PIERR. : Here, my honour's brother.

JAFF. : Is Belvidera gone ?

PIERR. : Renault has led her
Back to her own apartment : but, by Heaven !
Thou must not see her more till our work's over.

JAFF. : No.

PIERR. : Not for your life.

JAFF. : O Pierre, wert thou but she,
How I could pull thee down into my heart,
Gaze on thee till my eye-strings cracked with love,
Till all my sinews with its fire extended,
Fixed me upon the rack of ardent longing ;
Then swelling, sighing, raging to be blest,
Come like a panting turtle to thy breast,
On thy soft bosom, hovering, bill and play,
Confess the cause why last I fled away ;
Own 'twas a fault, but swear to give it o'er
And never follow false ambition more.

[*Exeunt ambo.*

ACT III

SCENE I

Enter AQUILINA *and her* MAID.

AQUIL. : Tell him I am gone to bed : tell him I am not at home ; tell him I've better company with me, or anything ; tell him, in short, I will not see him, the eternal, troublesome, vexatious fool : he's worse company than an ignorant physician—I'll not be disturbed at these unseasonable hours.

MAID : But madam ! He's here already, just entered the doors.

AQUIL. : Turn him out again, you unnecessary, useless, giddy-brained ass ! If he will not begone, set the house a-fire and burn us both : I had rather meet a toad in my dish than that old hideous animal in my chamber to-night.

Enter ANTONIO.

ANTO. : Nacky, Nacky, Nacky—how dost do, Nacky ? Hurry durry. I am come, little Nacky ; past eleven o'clock, a late hour ; time in all conscience to go to bed, Nacky—Nacky, did I say ? Ay Nacky ; Aquilina, lina, lina, quilina, quilina, quilina, Aquilina, Naquilina, Naquilina, Acky, Acky, Nacky, Nacky. Queen Nacky—come let's to bed—you Fubbs, you Pugg you—you little Puss—Purree Tuzzey—I am a Senator.

AQUIL. : You are a fool, I am sure.

ANTO. : May be so too, sweetheart. Never the worse Senator for all that. Come Nacky, Nacky, let's have a game at rump, Nacky.

AQUIL. : You would do well, signor, to be troublesome here no longer, but leave me to myself : be sober and go home, sir.

ANTO. : Home, Madonna !

AQUIL. : Ay, home, sir. Who am I ?

ANTO. : Madonna, as I take it you are my—you are—thou art my little Nicky Nacky . . . that's all !

AQUIL. : I find you are resolved to be troublesome, and so to make short of the matter in few words, I hate you, detest you, loathe you, I am weary of you, sick of you—hang you, you are an old, silly, impertinent, impotent, solicitous coxcomb, crazy in your head, and lazy in your body, love to be meddling with everything, and if you had not money, you are good for nothing.

ANTO. : Good for nothing ! Hurry durry, I'll try that presently. Sixty-one years old, and good for nothing : that's brave.—(*To the maid.*) Come, come, come, Mistress fiddle-faddle, turn you out for a season ; go turn out, I say, it is our will and pleasure to be private some moments—out, out when you are bid to.—(*Puts her out and locks the door.*) Good for nothing, you say.

AQUIL. : Why, what are you good for ?

ANTO. : In the first place, madam, I am old, and consequently very wise, very wise, Madonna, d'ye mark that ? in the second place, take notice, if you please, that I am a Senator, and when I think fit can make speeches, Madonna. Hurry durry, I can make a speech in the Senate-house now and then—would make your hair stand on end, Madonna.

AQUIL. : What care I for your speeches in the Senate-house : if you would be silent here, I should thank you.

ANTO. : Why, I can make speeches to thee too, my lovely Madonna ; for example—my cruel fair one.

[*Takes out a purse of gold and at every pause shakes it.*

Since it is my fate, that you should with your servant angry prove ; tho' late at night—I hope 'tis not too late with this to gain reception for my love—there's for thee, my little Nicky Nacky—take it, here take it—I say take it, or I'll fling it at your head—how now, rebel !

AQUIL. : Truly, my illustrious Senator, I must confess your honour is at present most profoundly eloquent indeed.

ANTO. : Very well ; come, now let's sit down and think upon't a little—come sit I say—sit down by me a little, my Nicky Nacky, ha !—(*Sits down.*) Hurry durry—good for nothing——

AQUIL. : No, sir, if you please I can know my distance and stand.

ANTO. : Stand : how ? Nacky up and I down ! Nay, then, let me exclaim with the poet,

> "Show me a case more pitiful who can,
> A standing woman, and a falling man."

Hurry durry—not sit down—see this, ye gods—You won't sit down ?

AQUIL. : No, sir.

ANTO. : Then look you now, suppose me a bull, a *basan*-bull, the bull of bulls, or any bull. Thus up I get and with my brows thus bent—I broo, I say I broo, I broo, I broo. You won't sit down, will you ?—I broo—

[*Bellows like a bull, and drives her about.*

AQUIL. : Well, sir, I must endure this. Now your (*she sits down*) honour has been a bull, pray what beast will your lordship please to be next ?

ANTO. : Now I'll be a Senator again, and thy lover, little Nicky Nacky ! (*He sits by her.*) Ah toad, toad, toad, toad ! spit in my face a little, Nacky—spit in my face prithee, spit in my face, never so little : spit but a little bit—spit, spit, spit, spit, when you are bid, I say ; do prithee spit—now, now, now. spit : what, you won't spit, will you ? Then I'll be a dog.

AQUIL. : A dog, my lord ?

ANTO. : Ay, a dog—and I'll give thee this t'other purse to let me be a dog—and to use me like a dog a little. Hurry, durry—I will—here 'tis.

[*Gives the purse.*

AQUIL. : Well, with all my heart. But let me beseech your dogship to play your tricks over as fast as you can, that you may come to stinking the sooner, and be turned out of doors as you deserve.

ANTO. : Ay, ay—no matter for that—that—(*He gets under the table*)—shan't move me—— Now, bow, wow wow, bow wow . . . [*Barks like a dog.*

AQUIL. : Hold, hold, hold, sir, I beseech you : what is't you do ? If curs bite, they must be kicked, sir. Do you see, kicked thus.

ANTO. : Ay, with all my heart : do kick, kick on, now I am under the table, kick again—kick harder—harder yet, bow wow wow, wow, bow—'od I'll have a snap at thy shins—bow wow wow, wow, bow—'od she kicks bravely.——

AQUIL. : Nay, then I'll go another way to work with you : and I think here's an instrument fit for the purpose. [*Fetches a whip and bell.* What, bite your mistress, sirrah ! out, out of doors, you dog, to kennel and be hanged—bite your mistress by the legs, you rogue—— [*She whips him.*

ANTO. : Nay, prithee Nacky, now thou art too loving : Hurry durry, 'od I'll be a dog no longer.

AQUIL. : Nay, none of your fawning and grinning : but be gone, or here's the discipline : what, bite your mistress by the legs, you mongrel ? out of doors—hout hout, to kennel, sirrah ! go.

ANTO. : This is very barbarous usage, Nacky, very barbarous : look you, I will not go—I will not stir from the door, that I resolve—hurry durry, what, shut me out ? [*She whips him out.*

AQUIL. : Ay, and if you come here any more to-night I'll have my footmen lug you, you cur : what, bite your poor mistress Nacky, sirrah !

Enter MAID.

MAID : Heavens, madam ! What's the matter ?

[*He howls at the door like a dog.*

AQUIL. : Call my footmen hither presently.

Enter two FOOTMEN.

MAID : They are here already, madam, the house is all alarmed with a strange noise, that nobody knows what to make of.

AQUIL. : Go all of you and turn that troublesome beast in the next room out of my house—If I ever see him within these walls again, without my leave for his admittance, you sneaking rogues, I'll have you poisoned all, poisoned, like rats ; every corner of the house shall stink of one of you ; go, and learn hereafter to know my pleasure. So now for my Pierre :

"Thus when godlike lover was displeased,
We sacrifice our fool and he's appeased." [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter BELVIDERA.

BELV. : I'm sacrificed ! I am sold ! betray'd to shame !
Inevitable ruin has enclosed me !
No sooner was I to my bed repaired
To weigh, and (weeping) ponder my condition,
But the old hoary wretch, to whose false care

My peace and honour was entrusted, came
(Like Tarquin) ghastly with infernal lust.
O thou, Roman Lucrece ! thou couldst find friends
To vindicate thy wrong,
I never had but one, and he's proved false ;
He that should guard my virtue, has betrayed it ;
Left me ! undone me ! O that I could hate him !
Where shall I go ! O whither whither wander ?

Enter JAFFEIR.

JAFF. : Can Belvidera want a resting place
When these poor arms are open to receive her ?
Oh, 'tis in vain to struggle with desires
Strong as my love to thee ; for every moment
I'm from thy sight, the heart within my bosom
Moans like a tender infant in its cradle
Whose nurse has left it ; come, and with the songs
Of gentle love persuade it to its peace.
BELV. : I fear the stubborn wanderer will not own me,
'Tis grown a rebel to be ruled no longer,
Scorns the indulgent bosom that first lulled it,
And like a disobedient child disdains
The soft authority of Belvidera.
JAFF. : There was a time——
BELV. : Yes, yes, there was a time
When Belvidera's tears, her cries, and sorrows,
Were not despised ; when if she chanced to sigh,
Or look but sad—there was indeed a time
When Jaffeir would have ta'en her in his arms,
Eased her declining head upon his breast,
And never left her till he found the cause.
But let her now weep seas,
Cry, till she rend the earth ; sigh till she burst
Her heart asunder ; still he bears it all ;
Deaf as the wind, and as the rocks unshaken.
JAFF. : Have I been deaf ? am I that rock unmoved,
Against whose root tears beat and sighs are sent ?
In vain have I beheld thy sorrows calmly !
Witness against me, heavens, have I done this ?
Then bear me in a whirlwind back again,
And let that angry dear one ne'er forgive me !
O thou too rashly censur'st of my love !
Couldst thou but think how I have spent this night,
Dark and alone, no pillow to my head,
Rest in my eyes, nor quiet in my heart,
Thou wouldst not, Belvidera, sure thou wouldst not
Talk to me thus, but like a pitying angel
Spreading thy wings come settle on my breast,
And hatch warm comfort there ere sorrows freeze it.
BELV. : Why, then, poor mourner, in what baleful corner
Hast thou been talking with that witch the night ?
On what cold stone hast thou been stretched along,
Gathering the grumbling winds about thy head,
To mix with theirs the accents of thy woes !

Oh, now I find the cause my love forsakes me !
I am no longer fit to bear a share
In his concernments : my weak female virtue
Must not be trusted ; 'tis too frail and tender.

JAFF. : O Portia ! Portia ! what a soul was thine !

BELV. : That Portia was a woman, and when Brutus,
Big with the fate of Rome (Heaven guard thy safety !)
Concealed from her the labours of his mind,
She let him see her blood was great as his,
Flowed from a spring as noble, and a heart
Fit to partake his troubles, as his love :
Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower
Thou gav'st last night in parting with me ; strike it
Here to my heart ; and as the blood flows from it
Judge if it run not pure as Cato's daughter's.

JAFF. : Thou art too good, and I indeed unworthy,
Unworthy so much virtue : teach me how
I may deserve such matchless love as thine,
And see with what attention I'll obey thee.

BELV. : Do not despise me : that's the all I ask.

JAFF. : Despise thee ! Hear me——

BELV. : Oh, thy charming tongue
Is but too well acquainted with my weakness,
Knows, let it name but love, my melting heart
Dissolves within my breast ; till with closed eyes
I reel into thy arms, and all's forgotten.

JAFF. : What shall I do ?

BELV. : Tell me ! be just, and tell me
Why dwells that busy cloud upon thy face ?
Why am I made a stranger ? why that sigh,
And I not know the cause ? Why, when the world
Is wrapt in rest, why chooses then my love
To wander up and down in horrid darkness
Loathing his bed, and these desiring arms ?
Why are these eyes bloodshot with tedious watching ?
Why starts he now ? and looks as if he wished
His fate were finished ? Tell me, ease my fears ;
Lest when we next time meet, I want the power
To search into the sickness of thy mind,
But talk as wildly then as thou look'st now.

JAFF. : O Belvidera !

BELV. : Why was I last night delivered to a villain ?

JAFF. : Ha, a villain !

BELV. : Yes ! to a villain ! Why at such an hour
Meets that assembly all made up of wretches
That look as hell had drawn 'em into league ?
Why, I in this hand, and in that a dagger,
Was I delivered with such dreadful ceremonies ?
" *To you, sirs, and to your honour I bequeath her,*
And with her this : whene'er I prove unworthy,
You know the rest, then strike it to her heart " ?
Oh ! why's that *rest* concealed from me ? must I
Be made the hostage of a hellish trust ?
For such I know I am ; that's all my value ?

But by the love and loyalty I owe thee,
I'll free thee from the bondage of these slaves,
Straight to the Senate, tell 'em all I know,
All that I think, all that my fears inform me !
JAFF. : Is this the Roman virtue ! this the blood
That boasts its purity with Cato's daughter's !
Would she have e'er betrayed her Brutus ?
BELV. : No :
For Brutus trusted her : wert thou so kind,
What would not Belvidera suffer for thee ?
JAFF. : I shall undo myself, and tell thee all.
BELV. : Look not upon me, as I am a woman,
But as a bone, thy wife, thy friend, who long
Has had admission to thy heart, and there
Studied the virtues of thy gallant nature ;
Thy constancy, thy courage and thy truth,
Have been my daily lesson : I have learnt them,
Am bold as thou, can suffer or despise
The worst of fates for thee, and with thee share them.
JAFF. : O you divinest Powers ! look down and hear
My prayers ! instruct me to reward this virtue !
Yet think a little ere thou tempt me further :
Think I have a tale to tell, will shake thy nature,
Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of
Into vile tears and despicable sorrows :
Then if thou shouldst betray me !
BELV. : Shall I swear ?
JAFF. : No : do not swear : I would not violate
Thy tender nature with so rude a bond :
But as thou hopest to see me live my days,
And love thee long, lock this within thy breast ;
I've bound myself by all the strictest sacraments
Divine and human——
BELV. : Speak !
JAFF. : To kill thy father——
BELV. : My father !
JAFF. : Nay, the throats of the whole Senate
Shall bleed, my Belvidera : he amongst us
That spares his father, brother, or his friend,
Is damned : how rich and beauteous will the face
Of Ruin look, when these wide streets run blood ;
I and the glorious partners of my fortune
Shouting, and striding o'er the prostrate dead,
Still to new waste ; whilst thou, far off in safety,
Smiling, shalt see the wonders of our daring,
And when night comes, with praise and love receive me.
BELV. : Oh !
JAFF. : Have a care, and shrink not even in thought !
For if thou dost——
BELV. : I know it, thou wilt kill me.
Do, strike thy sword into this bosom : lay me
Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe :
Murder my father ! tho' his cruel nature
Has persecuted me to my undoing,

Driven me to basest wants, can I behold him,
With smiles of vengeance, butchered in his age?
The sacred fountain of my life destroyed?
And canst thou shed the blood that gave me being,
Nay, be a traitor too, and sell thy country?
Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
Mix with hired slaves, bravos, and common stabbers,
Nose-slitters, alley-lurking villains! join
With such a crew and take a ruffian's wages
To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

JAFF. : Thou wrong'st me, Belvidera! I've engaged,
With men of souls : fit to reform the ills
Of all mankind : there's not a heart amongst them,
But's as stout as death, yet honest as the nature
Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were fashions.

BELV. : What's he, to whose curst hands last night thou gav'st me?
Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a story
Would rouse thy lion-heart out of its den
And make it rage with terrifying fury.

JAFF. : Speak on, I charge thee!

BELV. : O my love! if e'er
Thy Belvidera's peace deserved thy care,
Remove me from this place : last night, last night——

JAFF. : Distract me not, but give me all the truth.

BELV. : No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
Left in the power of that old son of mischief;
No sooner was I lain on my sad bed,
But that vile wretch approached me; loose, unbuttoned,
Ready for violation : then my heart
Throbb'd with its fears : oh, how I wept and sighed
And shrunk and trembled; wished in vain for him
That should protect me. Thou, alas! wert gone!

JAFF. : Patience, sweet Heaven, till I make vengeance sure!

BELV. : He drew the hideous dagger forth thou gav'st him,
And with upbraiding smiles, he said, "*Behold it;*
This is the pledge of a false husband's love :"
And in my arms then pressed, and would have clasped me;
But with my cries I scared his coward heart,
Till he withdrew, and muttered vows to hell.
These are thy friends! with these thy life, thy honour,
Thy love, all's staked, and all will go to ruin.

JAFF. : No more : I charge thee keep this secret close;
Clear up thy sorrows, look as if thy wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend.
As no complaint were made. No more, retire;
Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honour;
I'll heal its failings and deserve thy love.

BELV. : Oh, should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
In anger leave me, and return no more.

JAFF. : Return no more! I would not live without thee
Another night to purchase the creation.

BELV. : When shall we meet again?

JAFF. : Anon at twelve !
I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms,
Come like a travelled dove and bring thee peace.
BELV. : Indeed !
JAFF. : By all our loves !
BELV. : 'Tis hard to part :
But sure no falsehood ever looked so fairly.
Farewell—remember twelve. [*Exit* BELVIDERA.
JAFF. : Let Heaven forget me
When I remember not thy truth, thy love.
How curst is my condition, tossed and justled,
From ever corner ; Fortune's common fool,
The jest of rogues, an instrumental ass
For villains to lay loads of shame upon,
And drive about just for their ease and scorn.

Enter PIERRE.

PIERR. : Jaffeir !
JAFF. : Who calls !
PIERR. : A friend, that could have wished
T' have found thee otherwise employed : what, hunt
A wife on the dull soil ! sure a staunch husband
Of all hounds is the dullest ? wilt thou never
Never be weaned from caudles and confections ?
What feminine tale hast thou been listening to,
Of unaired shirts ; catarrhs and toothache got
By thin-soled shoes ? Damnation ! that a fellow
Chosen to be a sharer in the destruction
Of a whole people, should sneak thus in corners
To ease his fulsome lusts, and fool his mind.
JAFF. : May not a man then trifle out an hour
With a kind woman and not wrong his calling ?
PIERR. : Not in a cause like ours.
JAFF. : Then, friend, our cause
Is in a damned condition : for I'll tell thee,
That canker-worm called Lechery has touched it,
'Tis tainted vilely : wouldst thou think it, Renault
(That mortified old withered winter rogue)
Loves simple fornication like a priest ;
I found him out for watering at my wife :
He visited her last night like a kind guardian :
Faith, she has some temptations, that's the truth on't.
PIERR. : He durst not wrong his trust !
JAFF. : 'Twas something late, though,
To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.
PIERR. : Was she in bed ?
JAFF. : Yes, faith, in virgin sheets
White as her bosom, Pierre, dished neatly up,
Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste.
Oh, how the old fox stunk, I warrant thee,
When the rank fit was on him !
PIERR. : Patience guide me !
He used no violence ?

JAFF. : No, no ! out on't, violence !
Played with her neck ; brushed her with his grey-beard,
Struggled and towzed, tickled her till she squeaked a little
May be, or so—but not a jot of violence——
PIERR. : Damn him !
JAFF. : Ay, so say I : but hush, no more on't—
All hitherto is well, and I believe
Myself no monster yet : though no man knows
What fate he's born to : sure 'tis near the hour
We all should meet for our concluding orders :
Will the ambassador be here in person ?
PIERR. : No : he has sent commission to that villain, Renault,
To give the executing charge.
I'd have thee be a man, if possible,
And keep thy temper ; for a brave revenge
Ne'er comes too late.
JAFF. : Fear not, I'm cool as patience ;
Had he completed my dishonour, rather
Than hazard the success our hopes are ripe for,
I'd bear it all with mortifying virtue.
PIERR. : He's yonder coming this way through the hall ;
His thoughts seem full.
JAFF. : Prithee retire, and leave me
With him alone : I'll put him to some trial,
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.
PIERR. : Be careful, then. [*Exit* PIERRE.
JAFF. : Nay, never doubt, but trust me.
What, be a devil ! take a damning oath
For shedding native blood ! can there be a sin
In merciful repentance ? O this villain !

Enter RENAULT.

REN. : Perverse ! and peevish ! what a slave is Man !
To let his itching flesh thus get the better of him !
Despatch the tool her husband—that were well.
Who's there ?
JAFF. : A man.
REN. : My friend, my near ally !
The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge, is very well.
JAFF. : Sir, are you sure of that ?
Stands she in perfect health ? beats her pulse even ?
Neither too hot nor cold ?
REN. : What means that question ?
JAFF. : Oh, women have fantastic constitutions,
Inconstant as their wishes, always wavering,
And ne'er fixed ; was it not boldly done
Even at first sight to trust the thing I loved
(A tempting treasure too !) with youth so fierce
And vigorous as thine ? but thou art honest.
REN. : Who dares accuse me ?
JAFF. : Cursed be him that doubts
Thy virtue : I have tried it, and declare,
Were I to choose a guardian of my honour
I'd put it into thy keeping ; for I know thee.

REN. : Know me !
JAFF. : Ay, know thee : there's no falsehood in thee.
Thou lookst just as thou art : let us embrace.
Now wouldst thou cut my throat or I cut thine ?
REN. : You dare not do't.
JAFF. : You lie, sir.
REN. : How !
JAFF. : No more.
'Tis a base world, and must reform, that's all.

Enter SPINOSA, THEODORE, ELIOT, REVILLIDO, DURAND, BRAMVEIL, *and the rest of the* CONSPIRATORS.

REN. : Spinosa, Theodore !
SPIN. : The same.
REN. : You are welcome !
SPIN. : You are trembling, sir.
REN. : 'Tis a cold night indeed, I am aged,
Full of decay and natural infirmities : [PIERRE *re-enters.*
We shall be warm, my friend, I hope, to-morrow.
PIERR. : 'Twas not well done, thou shouldst have stroked him
And not have galled him.
JAFF. : Damn him, let him chew on't.
Heaven ! where am I ? beset with cursed fiends,
That wait to damn me : what a devil's man,
When he forgets his nature—hush, my heart.
REN. : My friends, 'tis late : are we assembled all ?
Where's Theodore ?
THEO. : At hand.
REN. : Spinosa.
SPIN. : Here.
REN. : Bramveil.
BRAM. : I'm ready.
REN. : Durand and Brabe.
DUR. : Command us,
We are both prepared !
REN. : Mezzana, Revillido,
Ternon, Retrosi ; oh, you are men, I find,
Fit to behold your fate, and meet her summons.
To-morrow's rising sun must see you all
Decked in your honours ! are the soldiers ready ?
OMN. : All, all.
REN. : You, Durand, with your thousand must possess
St. Mark's : you, captain, know your charge already :
'Tis to secure the ducal palace : you,
Brabe, with a hundred more must gain the Secque.
With the like number Bramveil to the Procuralle.
Be all this done with the least tumult possible,
Till in each place you post sufficient guards :
Then sheathe your swords in every breast you meet.
JAFF. : O reverend cruelty ! damn'd bloody villain !
REN. : During this execution, Durand, you
Must in the midst keep your battalia fast,
And, Theodore, be sure to plant the cannon
That may command the streets ; whilst Revillido,

Mezzana, Ternon, and Retrosi, guard you.
This done, we'll give the general alarm,
Apply petards, and force the ars'nal gates ;
Then fire the city round in several places,
Or with our cannon, if it dare resist,
Batter't to ruin. But 'bove all I charge you
Shed blood enough, spare neither sex nor age,
Name nor condition ; if there live a Senator
After to-morrow, tho' the dullest rogue
That e'er said nothing, we have lost our ends ;
If possible, let's kill the very name
Of Senator, and bury it in blood.

JAFF. : Merciless, horrid slave !—Ay, blood enough !
Shed blood enough, old Renault : how thou charm'st me !

REN. : But one thing more, and then farewell till Fate
Join us again, or separate us ever :
First, let's embrace, Heav'n knows who next shall thus
Wing ye together : but let's all remember
We wear no common cause upon our swords ;
Let each man think that on his single virtue
Depends the good and fame of all the rest,
Eternal honour or perpetual infamy.
Let's remember through what dreadful hazards
Propitious Fortune hitherto has led us,
How often on the brink of some discovery
Have we stood tottering, and yet kept our ground
So well, the busiest searchers ne'er could follow
Those subtle tracks which puzzled all suspicion :
You droop, sir.

JAFF. : No : with a most profound attention
I've heard it all, and wonder at thy virtue.

REN. : Tho' there be yet few hours 'twixt them and Ruin,
Are not the Senate lulled in full security,
Quiet and satisfied, as fools are always !
Never did so profound repose forerun
Calamity so great : nay, our good fortune
Has blinded the most piercing of mankind ;
Strengthened the fearful'st, charm'd the most suspectful,
Confounded the most subtle ; for we live,
We live, my friends, and quickly shall our life
Prove fatal to these tyrants : let's consider
That we destroy oppression, avarice,
A people nursed up equally with vices
And loathsome lusts, which Nature most abhors,
And such as without shame she cannot suffer.

JAFF. : O Belvidera, take me to thy arms
And show me where's my peace, for I have lost it.
[*Exit* JAFFEIR.

REN. : Without the least remorse then let's resolve
With fire and sword t' exterminate these tyrants,
And when we shall behold those curst tribunals,
Stained by the tears and sufferings of the innocent,
Burning with flames rather from Heav'n than ours,
The raging furious and unpitying soldier

Pulling his reeking dagger from the bosoms
Of gasping wretches ; death in every quarter,
With all that sad disorder can produce,
To make a spectacle of horror : then,
Then let us call to mind, my dearest friends,
That there is nothing pure upon the earth,
That the most valued things have most alloys
And that in change of all those vile enormities,
Under whose weight this wretched country labours,
The means are only in our hands to crown them.

PIERR. : And may those Powers above that are propitious
To gallant minds record this cause, and bless it.

REN. : Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
Should there, my friends, be found amongst us one
False to this glorious enterprise, what fate,
What vengeance were enough for such a villain ?

ELIOT : Death here without repentance, hell hereafter.

REN. : Let that be my lot, if as here I stand
Lifted by Fate amongst her darling sons,
Tho' I'd one only brother, dear by all
The strictest ties of nature ; tho' one hour
Had given us birth, one fortune fed our wants,
One only love, and that but of each other,
Still filled our minds : could I have such a friend
Joined in this cause, and had but ground to fear
Meant foul play ; may this right hand drop from me,
If I'd not hazard all my future peace,
And stab him to the heart before you : who
Would not do less ? Wouldst not thou, Pierre, the same ?

PIERR. : You've singled me, sir, out for this hard question,
As if 'twere started only for my sake !
Am I the thing you fear ? Here, here's my bosom,
Search it with all your swords ! am I a traitor ?

REN. : No : but I fear your late commended friend
Is little less : come, sirs, 'tis now no time
To trifle with our safety. Where's this Jaffeir ?

SPIN. : He left the room just now in strange disorder.

REN. : Nay, there's danger in him : I observ'd him,
During the time I took for explanation,
He was transported from most deep attention
To a confusion which he could not smother.
His looks grew full of sadness and surprise,
All which betrayed a wavering spirit in him,
That laboured with reluctancy and sorrow ;
What's requisite for safety must be done
With speedy execution : he remains
Yet in our power : I for my own part wear
A dagger.

PIERR. : Well.

REN. : And I could wish it !

PIERR. : Where ?

REN. : Buried in his heart.

PIERR. : Away ! we're yet all friends ;
No more of this, 'twill breed ill blood amongst us.

SPIN. : Let us all draw our swords, and search the house,
Pull him from the dark hole where he sits brooding
O'er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of him.
PIERR. : Who talks of killing ? who's he'll shed the blood
That's dear to me ! is't you ? or you ? or you, sir ?
What, not one speak ? how you stand gaping all
On your grave oracle, your wooden god there ;
Yet not a word : then, sir, I'll tell you a secret,
Suspicion's but at best a coward's virtue ! [*To* RENAULT.
REN. : A coward—— [*Handles his sword.*
PIERR. : Put, put up the sword, old man,
Thy hand shakes at it ; come, let's heal this breach,
I am too hot ; we yet may live as friends.
SPIN. : Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be so.
PIERR. : Again : who's that ?
SPIN. : 'Twas I.
THEO. : And I.
REVILL : And I.
ELIOT : And all.
REN. : Who are on my side ?
SPIN. : Every honest sword ;
Let's die like men and not be sold like slaves.
PIERR. : One such word more, by Heav'n I'll to the Senate
And hang ye all, like dogs in clusters.
Why peep your coward swords half out their shells ?
Why do you not all brandish them like mine ?
You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing ?
REN. : Go to thy Senate and betray us, hasten,
Secure thy wretched life, we fear to die
Less than thou dar'st be honest.
PIERR. : That's rank falsehood.
Fear'st not thou death ? fie, there's a knavish itch
In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting.
Had Jaffeir's wife proved kind, he'd still been true.
Foh—how that stinks ?
Thou die ! thou kill my friend, or thou, or thou,
Or thou, with that lean wither'd wretched face !
Away ! disperse all to your several charges,
And meet to-morrow where your honour calls you ;
I'll bring that man, whose blood you so much thirst for,
And you shall see him venture for you fairly—
Hence, hence, I say. [*Exit* RENAULT *angrily.*
SPIN. : I fear we've been to blame ;
And done too much.
THEO. : 'Twas too far urged against the man you loved.
REVILL. : Here, take our swords and crush 'em with your feet.
SPIN. : Forgive us, gallant friend.
PIERR. : Nay, now ye've found
The way to melt and cast me as you will :
I'll fetch this friend and give him to your mercy :
Nay, he shall die if you will take him from me ;
For your repose I'll quit my heart's jewel,
But would not have him torn away by villains
And spiteful villainy.

SPIN. : No ; may you both
For ever live and fill the world with fame !
PIERR. : Now you are too kind. Whence rose all this discord ?
Oh, what a dangerous precipice have we scaped !
How near a fall was all we had long been building !
What an eternal blot had stained our glories,
If one, the bravest and the best of men,
Had fallen a sacrifice to rash suspicion,
Butchered by those whose cause he came to cherish :
Oh, could you know him all as I have known him,
How good he is, how just, how true, how brave,
You would not leave this place till you had seen him ;
Humbled yourselves before him, kissed his feet,
And gained remission for the worst of follies ;
Come but to-morrow all your doubts shall end,
And to your loves me better recommend,
That I've preserved your fame, and saved my friend.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT IV

SCENE I

Enter JAFFEIR *and* BELVIDERA.

JAFF. : Where dost thou lead me ? Every step I move,
Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb
Of a rack'd friend : O my dear charming ruin !
Where are we wandering ?
BELV. : To eternal honour ;
To do a deed shall chronicle thy name,
Among the glorious legends of those few
That have sav'd sinking nations : thy renown
Shall be the future song of all the virgins,
Who by thy piety have been preserved
From horrid violation : every street
Shall be adorn'd with statues to thy honour,
And at thy feet this great inscription written,
Remember him that propp'd the fall of Venice.
JAFF. : Rather, remember him, who after all
The sacred bonds of oaths and holier friendship,
In fond compassion to a woman's tears
Forgot his manhood, virtue, truth and honour,
To sacrifice the bosom that relieved him.
Why wilt thou damn me ?
BELV. : O inconstant man !
How will you promise ? how will you deceive ?
Do return back, replace me in my bondage,
Tell all thy friends how dangerously thou lov'st me,
And let thy dagger do its bloody office ;
O that kind dagger, Jaffeir, how 'twill look
Stuck through my heart, drench'd in my blood to th' hilts !
Whilst these poor dying eyes shall with their tears
No more torment thee, then thou wilt be free :
Or if thou think'st it nobler, let me live
Till I'm a victim to the hateful lust

Of that infernal devil, that old fiend
That's damned himself and would undo mankind :
Last night, my love——
JAFF. : Name, name it not again,
It shows a beastly image to my fancy,
Will wake me into madness. Oh, the villain !
That durst approach such purity as thine
On terms so vile : destruction, swift destruction
Fall on my coward-head, and make my name
The common scorn of fools if I forgive him ;
If I forgive him, if I not revenge
With utmost rage and most unstaying fury,
Thy suffering, thou dear darling of my life.
BELV. : Delay no longer, then, but to the Senate ;
And tell the dismal'st story ever utter'd,
Tell 'em what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
Have been prepared, how near's the fatal hour !
Save thy poor country, save the reverend blood
Of all its nobles, which to-morrow's dawn
Must else see shed : save the poor tender lives
Of all those little infants which the swords
Of murtherers are whetting for this moment :
Think thou already hearst their dying screams,
Think that thou seest their sad distracted mothers
Kneeling before thy feet, and begging pity
With torn dishevell'd hair and streaming eyes,
Their naked mangled breasts besmear'd with blood,
And even the milk with which their fondled babes,
Softly they hush'd, dropping in anguish from 'em.
Think thou seest this, and then consult thy heart.
JAFF. : Oh !
BELV. : Think too, if (that) thou lose this present minute,
What miseries the next day bring upon thee.
Imagine all the horrors of that night,
Murder and rapine, waste and desolation,
Confusedly ranging. Think what then may prove
My lot ! the ravisher may then come safe,
And midst the terror of the public ruin
Do a damn'd deed ; perhaps to lay a train
May catch thy life ; then where will be revenge,
The dear revenge that's due to such a wrong ?
JAFF. : By all Heaven's powers, prophetic truth dwells in thee,
For every word thou speak'st strikes through my heart
Like a new light, and shows it how't has wandered ;
Just what thou'st made me, take me, Belvidera,
And lead me to the place where I'm to say
This bitter lesson, where I must betray
My truth, my virtue, constancy and friends :
Must I betray my friends ! Ah, take me quickly,
Secure me well before that thought's renewed ;
If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.
BELV. : Hast thou a friend more dear than Belvidera ?
JAFF. : No, thou'rt my soul itself ; wealth, friendship, honour,
All present joys, and earnest of all future,

Are summ'd in thee : methinks when in thy arms
Thus leaning on thy breast, one minute's more
Than a long thousand years of vulgar hours.
Why was such happiness not given me pure ?
Why dash'd with cruel wrongs, and bitter wantings ?
Come, lead me forward now like a tame lamb
To sacrifice, thus in his fatal garlands,
Deck'd fine and pleas'd, the wanton skips and plays,
Trots by the enticing flattering priestess' side,
And much transported with his little pride,
Forgets his dear companions of the plain
Till, by her bound, he's on the altar lain,
Yet then too hardly bleats, such pleasure's in the pain.

Enter OFFICER *and six* GUARDS.

OFFIC. : Stand, who goes there ?
BELV. : Friends.
JAFF. : Friends, Belvidera ! hide me from my friends :
By heaven, I'd rather see the face of hell,
Than meet the man I love.
OFFIC. : But what friends are you ?
BELV. : Friends to the Senate and the State of Venice.
OFFIC. : My orders are to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring 'em to the Council,
Who now are sitting.
JAFF. : Sir, you shall be obeyed.
Hold, brutes, stand off, none of your paws upon me.
Now the lot's cast, and Fate do what thou wilt ! [*Exeunt guarded.*

SCENE II.—*The Senate-house*

Where appear sitting, the DUKE OF VENICE, PRIULI, ANTONIO, *and eight other* SENATORS.

DUKE : Antony, Priuli, Senators of Venice,
Speak ; why are we assembled here this night ?
What have you to inform us of, concerns
The State of Venice, honour, or its safety ?
PRIU. : Could words express the story I have to tell you,
Fathers, these tears were useless, these sad tears
That fall from my old eyes ; but there is cause
We all should weep ; tear off these purple robes,
And wrap ourselves in sackcloth, sitting down
On the sad earth, and cry aloud to Heaven.
Heaven knows if yet there be an hour to come
Ere Venice be no more.
ALL SENATORS : How !
PRIU. : Nay, we stand
Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
Within this city's formed a dark conspiracy,
To massacre us all, our wives and children,
Kindred and friends, our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes : nay, the hour too, fix'd ;
The swords, for aught I know, drawn e'en this moment,

And the wild waste begun : from unknown hands
I had this warning : but if we are men
Let's not be tamely butchered, but do something
That may inform the world in after ages,
Our virtue was not ruin'd though we were. [*A noise without.*
Room, room, make room for some prisoners——
SECOND SENATOR : Let's raise the city.

Enter OFFICER *and* GUARD.

PRIU. : Speak there, what disturbance ?
OFFIC. : Two prisoners have the guard seiz'd in the streets,
Who say they come to inform this reverend Senate,
About the present danger.

Enter JAFFEIR *and* BELVIDERA *guarded.*

ALL : Give 'em entrance——
Well, who are you ?
JAFF. : A villain.
ANTO. : Short and pithy.
The man speaks well.
JAFF. : Would every man that hears me
Would deal so honestly, and own his title.
DUKE : 'Tis rumour'd that a plot has been contriv'd
Against this State ; that you have a share in't too.
If you're a villain, to redeem your honour,
Unfold the truth and be restored with mercy.
JAFF. : Think not that I to save my life come hither,
I know its value better ; but in pity
To all those wretches whose unhappy dooms
Are fix'd and seal'd. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenanted foe of Venice ;
But use me as my dealings may deserve
And I may prove a friend.
DUKE : The slave capitulates ;
Give him the tortures.
JAFF. : That you dare not do,
Your fears won't let you, nor the longing itch
To hear a story which you dread the truth of,
Truth which the fear of smart shall ne'er get from me.
Cowards are scared with threat'nings ; boys are whipp'd
Into confessions : but a steady mind
Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.
Give him the tortures ! Name but such a thing
Again, by Heaven I'll shut these lips for ever,
Not all your racks, your engines, or your wheels
Shall force a groan away—that you may guess at.
ANTO. : A bloody-minded fellow, I'll warrant ;
A damn'd bloody-minded fellow.
DUKE : Name your conditions.
JAFF. : For myself full pardon,
Besides the lives of two and twenty friends, [*Delivers a list.*
Whose names are here enrolled : nay, let their crimes
Be ne'er so monstrous I must have the oaths
And sacred promise of this reverend Council,

That in a full assembly of the Senate
The thing I ask be ratified. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the secrets of your danger.
ALL : We'll swear.
DUKE : Propose the oath.
JAFF. : By all the hopes
Ye have of peace and happiness hereafter,
Swear.
ALL : We all swear.
JAFF. : To grant me what I've asked,
Ye swear.
ALL : We swear.
JAFF. : And as ye keep the oath,
May you and your posterity be blest
Or curst for ever.
ALL : Else be curst for ever.

JAFF. : Then here's the list, and with't the full disclose
Of all that threatens you. [*Delivers another paper.*
Now Fate, thou hast caught me.
ANTO. : Why, what a disgraceful catalogue of cut-throats is here
I'll warrant you not one of these fellows but has a face like a lion.
I dare not so much as read their names over.
DUKE : Give orders that all diligent search be made
To seize these men, their characters are public ;
The paper intimates their rendezvous
To be at the house of a famed Grecian courtesan
Called Aquilina ; see that place secured.
ANTO. : What, my Nicky Nacky, Hurry Durry, Nicky Nacky in the plot—I'll make a speech. Most noble Senators,
What headlong apprehension drives you on,
Right noble, wise and truly solid senators,
To violate the laws and rights of nations ?
The lady is a lady of renown.
'Tis true, she holds a house of fair reception,
And though I say't myself, as many more
Can say as well as I.
SECOND SENATOR : My lord, long speeches
Are frivolous here when dangers are so near us ;
We all well know your interest in that lady,
The world talks loud on't.
ANTO. : Verily, I have done,
I say no more.
DUKE : But since he has declared
Himself concerned, pray, captain, take great caution
To treat the fair one as becomes her character,
And let her bed-chamber be searched with decency.
You, Jaffeir, must with patience bear till morning
To be our prisoner.
JAFF. : Would the chains of death
Had bound me fast ere I had known this minute.
I've done a deed will make my story hereafter
Quoted in competition with all ill ones ;
The history of my wickedness shall run

Down through the low traditions of the vulgar,
And boys be taught to tell the tale of Jaffeir.

DUKE : Captain, withdraw your prisoner.

JAFF. : Sir, if possible,
Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose me,
Where I may doze out what I've left of life,
Forget myself and this day's guilt and falsehood.
Cruel remembrance, how shall I appease thee ! [*Exit guarded.*

Noise without :
More traitors ; room, room, make room there.

DUKE : How's this ? guards !
Where are our guards ? shut up the gates, the treason's
Already at our doors.

Enter OFFICER.

OFFIC. : My lords, more traitors :
Seized in the very act of consultation;
Furnished with arms and instruments of mischief.
Bring in the prisoners.

Enter PIERRE, RENAULT, THEODORE, ELIOT, REVILLIDO, *and other* CONSPIRATORS, *in fetters, guarded.*

PIERR. : You, my lords and fathers
(As you are pleased to call yourselves) of Venice ;
If you sit here to guide the course of Justice,
Why these disgraceful chains upon the limbs
That have so often laboured in your service ?
Are these the wreaths of triumph ye bestow
On those that bring you conquests home and honours ?

DUKE : Go on : you shall be heard, sir.

ANTO. : And be hanged too, I hope.

PIERR. : Are these the trophies I've deserv'd for fighting
Your battles with confederated powers ?
When winds and seas conspir'd to overthrow you,
And brought the fleets of Spain to your own harbours :
When you, great Duke, shrunk trembling in your palace,
And saw your wife, th' Adriatic, plough'd
Like a lewd whore by bolder prows than yours,
Stepp'd not I forth, and taught your loose Venetians,
The task of honour and the way to greatness,
Rais'd you from your capitulating fears
To stipulate the terms of sued-for peace ?
And this my recompense ? If I'm a traitor
Produce my charge ; or show the wretch that's base enough
And brave enough to tell me I'm a traitor.

DUKE : Know you one Jaffeir ? [*All the* CONSPIRATORS *murmur.*

PIERR. : Yes, and know his virtue,
His justice, truth : his general worth and sufferings
From a hard father taught me first to love him.

Enter JAFFEIR *guarded.*

DUKE : See him brought forth.

PIERR. : My friend too bound ! nay then
Our fate has conquered us, and we must fall.
Why droops the man whose welfare's so much mine
They're but one thing ? these reverend tyrants, Jaffeir,
Call us all traitors : art thou one, my brother ?
JAFF. : To thee I am the falsest, veriest slave
That e'er betrayed a generous trusting friend,
And gave up honour to be sure of ruin.
All our fair hopes which morning was to have crown'd
Has this curs'd tongue o'erthrown.
PIERR. : So, then, all's over ;
Venice has lost her freedom ; I my life ;
No more, farewell.
DUKE : Say, will you make confession
Of your vile deeds and trust the Senate's mercy ?
PIERR. : Cursed be your Senate : cursed your constitution :
The curses of growing factions and division
Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,
And make the robes of government you wear,
Hateful to you as these base chains to me.
DUKE : Pardon or death ?
PIERR. : Death, honourable death !
REN. : Death's the best thing we ask or you can give.
ALL CONSPIR. : No shameful bonds, but honourable death.
DUKE : Break up the council : captain, guard your prisoners.
Jaffeir, you are free, but these must wait for judgment.
[*Exeunt all the* SENATORS.
PIERR. : Come, where's my dungeon ? lead me to my straw :
It will not be the first time I've lodged hard
To do your Senate service.
JAFF. : Hold one moment.
PIERR. : Who's he disputes the judgment of the Senate ?
Presumptuous rebel—on—— [*Strikes* JAFFEIR.
JAFF. : By Heaven, you stir not.
I must be heard, I must have leave to speak ;
Thou hast disgrac'd me, Pierre, by a vile blow :
Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice ?
But use me as thou wilt, thou canst not wrong me,
For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries ;
Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy,
With pity and with charity behold me ;
Shut not thy heart against a friend's repentance,
But as there dwells a god-like nature in thee
Listen with mildness to my supplications.
PIERR. : What whining monk art thou ? what holy cheat,
That wouldst encroach upon my credulous ears
And cant'st thus vilely ? hence. I know thee not.
Dissemble and be nasty : leave me, hypocrite.
JAFF. : Not know me, Pierre ?
PIERR. : No, I know thee not : what art thou ?
JAFF. : Jaffeir, thy friend, thy once loved, valued friend !
Though now deservedly scorned, and used most hardly.
PIERR. : Thou Jaffeir ! Thou my once loved, valued friend ?
By heavens, thou liest ; the man, so call'd, my friend,

Was generous, honest, faithful, just and valiant,
Noble in mind, and in his person lovely,
Dear to my eyes and tender to my heart :
But thou a wretched, base, false, worthless coward,
Poor even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect,
All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee.
Prithee avoid, nor longer cling thus round me,
Like something baneful, that my nature's chill'd at.

JAFF. : I have not wrong'd thee, by these tears I have not.
But still am honest, true, and hope too, valiant :
My mind still full of thee, therefore still noble ;
Let not thy eyes then shun me, nor thy heart
Detest me utterly ; oh, look upon me,
Look back and see my sad sincere submission !
How my heart swells, as even 'twould burst my bosom ;
Fond of its gaol, and labouring to be at thee !
What shall I do ? what say to make thee hear me ?

PIERR. : Hast thou not wronged me ? dar'st thou call thyself
Jaffeir, that once loved, valued friend of mine,
And swear thou hast not wronged me ? whence these chains ?
Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment ?
Whence this dishonour, but from thee, thou false one ?

JAFF. : All's true, yet grant one thing, and I've done asking.

PIERR. : What's that ?

JAFF. : To take thy life on such conditions
The Council have propos'd : thou and thy friends
May yet live long, and to be better treated.

PIERR. : Life ! ask my life ! confess ! record myself
A villain for the privilege to breathe,
And carry up and down this cursed city
A discontented and repining spirit,
Burthensome to itself a few years longer,
To lose it, may be, at last in a lewd quarrel,
For some new friend, treacherous and false as thou art !
No, this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,
When only men like thee are fit to live in't.

JAFF. : By all that's just ——

PIERR. : Swear by some other powers,
For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.

JAFF. : Then by that hell I merit. I'll not leave thee,
Till to thyself at least thou'rt reconciled,
However thy resentment deal with me.

PIERR. : Not leave me !

JAFF. : No, thou shalt not force me from thee.
Use me reproachfully, and like a slave,
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs
On my poor head : I'll bear it all with patience,
Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty,
Lie at thy feet and kiss 'em though they spurn me,
Till, wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,
And raise me to thy arms with dear forgiveness.

PIERR. : Art thou not——

JAFF. : What?
PIERR. : A traitor?
JAFF. : Yes.
PIERR. : A villain?
JAFF. : Granted.
PIERR. : A coward, a most scandalous coward,
Spiritless, void of honour, one who has sold
Thy everlasting fame for shameless life?
JAFF. : All, all, and more, much more : my faults are numberless.
PIERR. : And wouldst have me live on terms like thine?
Base as thou art false——
JAFF. : No, 'tis to me that's granted.
The safety of thy life was all I aim'd at,
In recompense for faith and trust so broken.
PIERR. : I scorn it more because preserv'd by thee,
And as when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy misfortunes, sought thee in thy miseries,
Relieved thy wants, and raised thee from thy state
Of wretchedness in which thy fate had plung'd thee,
To rank thee in my list of noble friends;
All I received in surety for thy truth,
Were unregarded oaths; and this, this dagger,
Given with a worthless pledge, thou since hast stol'n,
So I restore it back to thee again,
Swearing by all those powers which thou hast violated,
Never from this curs'd hour to hold communion,
Friendship or interest with thee, though our years
Were to exceed those limited the world.
Take it—farewell—for now I owe thee nothing.
JAFF. : Say thou wilt live, then.
PIERR. : For my life, dispose it
Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tired with.
JAFF. : O Pierre!
PIERR. : No more.
JAFF. : My eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
But languish after thine, and ache with gazing.
PIERR. : Leave me—nay, then, thus, thus I throw thee from me
And curses, great as is thy falsehood catch thee.
JAFF. : Amen.
He's gone, my father, friend, preserver,
And here's the portion he has left me. [*Holds the dagger up.*
This dagger, well remembered, with this dagger
I gave a solemn vow of dire importance,
Parted with this and Belvidera together;
Have a care, mem'ry, drive that thought no farther.
No, I'll esteem it as a friend's last legacy,
Treasure it up within this wretched bosom,
Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,
That when they meet, they start not from each other.
So; now for thinking: a blow, call'd traitor, villain,
Coward, dishonourable coward, fough!
O for a long sound sleep, and so forget it!
Down, busy devil.—

Enter BELVIDERA.

BELV. : Whither shall I fly ?
Where hide me and my miseries together ?
Where's now the Roman constancy I boasted ?
Sunk into trembling fears and desperation !
Not daring now to look up to that dear face
Which used to smile even on my faults, but down
Bending these miserable eyes to earth,
Must move in penance, and implore much mercy.

JAFF. : Mercy, kind Heaven, has surely endless stores
Hoarded for thee of blessings yet untasted ;
Let wretches loaded hard with guilt as I am,
Bow [with] the weight and groan beneath the burthen,
Creep with a remnant of that strength they've left,
Before the footstool of that Heaven they've injured.
O Belvidera ! I'm the wretched'st creature
E'er crawled on earth : now if thou hast virtue, help me,
Take me into thy arms, and speak the words of peace
To my divided soul, that wars within me,
And raises every sense to my confusion ;
By Heav'n, I'm tottering on the very brink
Of peace ; and thou art all the hold I've left.

BELV. : Alas ! I know thy sorrows are most mighty ;
I know thou'st cause to mourn ; to mourn, my Jaffeir,
With endless cries, and never-ceasing wailings,
Thou'st lost——

JAFF. : Oh, I have lost what can't be counted ;
My friend too, Belvidera, that dear friend,
Who, next to thee was all my health rejoiced in,
Has used me like a slave ; shamefully used me ;
'Twould break thy pitying heart to hear the story.
What shall I do ? resentment, indignation,
Love, pity, fear and mem'ry, how I've wronged him,
Distract my quiet with the very thought on't,
And tear my heart to pieces in my bosom.

BELV. : What has he done ?

JAFF. : Thou'dst hate me, should I tell thee.

BELV. : Why ?

JAFF. : Oh, he has us'd me ! yet, by Heaven, I bear it :
He has us'd me, Belvidera, but first swear
That when I've told thee, thou'lt not loathe me utterly,
Though vilest blots and stains appear upon me ;
But still at least with charitable goodness,
Be near me in the pangs of my affliction,
Not scorn me, Belvidera, as he has done.

BELV. : Have I then e'er been false that now I'm doubted ?
Speak, what's the cause I'm grown into distrust,
Why thought unfit to hear my love's complaining ?

JAFF. : Oh !

BELV. : Tell me.

JAFF. : Bear my failings, for they are many.
O my dear angel ! in that friend I've lost
All my soul's peace ; for every thought of him

Strikes my sense hard, and deads it in my brains ;
Wouldst thou believe it ?
BELV. : Speak !
JAFF. : Before we parted,
Ere yet his guards had led him to his prison,
Full of severest sorrows for his suff'rings,
With eye o'erflowing and a bleeding heart,
Humbling myself almost beneath my nature,
As at his feet I kneel'd, and sued for mercy,
Forgetting all our friendship, all the dearness,
In which we've lived so many years together,
With a reproachful hand, he dashed a blow,
He struck me, Belvidera, by Heaven, he struck me,
Buffeted, called me traitor, villain, coward.
Am I a coward ? am I a villain ? tell me :
Thou'rt the best judge, and mad'st me, if I am so.
Damnation : coward !
BELV. : Oh ! forgive him, Jaffeir.
And if his sufferings wound thy heart already,
What will they do to-morrow ?
JAFF. : Hah !
BELV. : To-morrow,
When thou shalt see him stretch'd in all the agonies
Of a tormenting and a shameful death,
His bleeding bowels, and his broken limbs,
Insulted o'er by a vile butchering villain ;
What will thy heart do then ? oh, sure 'twill stream
Like my eyes now.
JAFF. : What means thy dreadful story ?
Death, and to-morrow ? broken limbs and bowels !
Insulted o'er by a vile butchering villain !
By all my fears I shall start out to madness,
With barely guessing if the truth's hid longer.
BELV. : The faithless Senators, 'tis they've decreed it :
They say according to our friend's request,
They shall have death, and not ignoble bondage :
Declare their promised mercy all as forfeited,
False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession ;
Warrants are passed for public death to-morrow.
JAFF. : Death ! doomed to die ! condemned unheard ! unpleaded !
BELV. : Nay, cruell'st racks and torments are preparing,
To force confessions from their dying pangs.
Oh, do not look so terribly upon me,
How your lips shake, and all your face disordered !
What means my love ?
JAFF. : Leave me, I charge thee, leave me—strong temptations
Wake in my heart.
BELV. : For what ?
JAFF. : No more, but leave me.
BELV. : Why ?
JAFF. : Oh ! by Heaven I love you with that fondness
I would not have thee stay a moment longer,
Near these curs'd hands ; are they not cold upon thee ?
[*Pulls the dagger half out of his bosom and puts it back again.*

BELV. : No, everlasting comfort's in thy arms.
To lean thus on thy breast is softer ease
Than downy pillows deck'd with leaves of roses.
JAFF. : Alas ! thou think'st not of the thorns 'tis filled with :
Fly ere they [gall] thee : there's a lurking serpent,
Ready to leap and sting thee to thy heart ;
Art thou not terrified ?
BELV. : No.
JAFF. : Call to mind,
What thou hast done, and whither thou hast brought me.
BELV. : Hah !
JAFF. : Where's my friend ! my friend, thou smiling mischief ?
Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late, thou shouldst have fled
When thy guilt first had cause, for dire revenge
Is up and raging for my friend. He groans,
Hark how he groans, his screams are in my ears
Already ; see, they've fix'd him on the wheel,
And now they tear him—Murther ! perjur'd Senate !
Murther—Oh !—hark thee, traitress, thou hast done this :
[*Fumbling for his dagger.*
Thanks to thy tears and false persuading love.
How her eyes speak ! O thou bewitching creature !
Madness cannot hurt thee : come, thou little trembler,
Creep, even into my heart, and there lie safe :
'Tis thy own citadel—ha !—yet stand off,
Heaven must have justice, and my broken vows
Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy ;
I'll wink and then 'tis done——
BELV. : What means the lord
Of me, my life and love ? what's in thy bosom,
[*Draws the dagger, offers to stab her.*
Thou grasp'st at so ? Nay, why am I thus treated ?
What wilt thou do ? Ah ! do not kill me, Jaffeir,
Pity these panting breasts, and trembling limbs,
That used to clasp thee when thy looks were milder,
That yet hang heavy on my unpurg'd soul,
And plunge it not into eternal darkness.
JAFF. : No, Belvidera, when we parted last
I gave this dagger with thee as in trust
To be thy portion, if I e'er proved false.
On such condition was my truth believ'd :
But now 'tis forfeited and must be paid for.
[*Offers to stab her again.*
BELV. : Oh, mercy ! [*Kneeling.*
JAFF. : Nay, no struggling.
BELV. : Now, then, kill me. [*Leaps upon his neck and kisses him.*
While thus I cling about thy cruel neck,
Kiss thy revengeful lips and die in joys
Greater than any I can guess hereafter.
JAFF. : I am, I am a coward ; witness't, heaven,
Witness it, earth, and every being witness ;
'Tis but one blow ; yet, by immortal love,
I cannot bear a thought to harm thee ;
[*He throws away the dagger and embraces her.*

The seal of Providence is sure upon thee,
And thou wert born for yet unheard-of wonders :
Oh, thou wert either born to save or damn me !
By all the power that's given thee o'er my soul,
By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles,
By the victorious love that still waits on thee,
Fly to thy cruel father : save my friend,
Or all our future quiet's lost for ever :
Fall at his feet, cling round his reverend knees :
Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears
Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him ;
Crush him in thy arms, and torture him with thy softness :
Nor, till thy prayers are granted, set him free,
But conquer him, as thou hast vanquish'd me.

[*Exeunt ambo.*

ACT V

SCENE I

Enter PRIULI, *solus.*

PRIU. : Why, cruel Heaven, have my unhappy days
Been lengthen'd to this sad one ? Oh, dishonour
And deathless infamy is fall'n upon me !
Was it my fault ? Am I a traitor ? No.
But then, my only child, my daughter, wedded ;
There my best blood runs foul, and a disease
Incurable has seized upon my memory,
To make it rot and stink to after ages.
Cursed be the fatal minute when I got her ;
Or would that I'd been anything but man,
And raised an issue which would ne'er have wrong'd me.
The miserablest creatures, man excepted,
Are not the less esteemed, though their posterity
Degenerate from the virtues of their fathers ;
The vilest beasts are happy in their offsprings,
While only man gets traitors, whores and villains.
Cursed be the names, and some swift blow from Fate
Lay his head deep, where mine may be forgotten.

Enter BELVIDERA *in a long mourning veil.*

BELV. : He's there, my father, my inhuman father,
That, for three years, has left an only child
Exposed to all the outrages of Fate,
And cruel ruin—oh !——
PRIU. : What child of sorrow
Art thou that com'st thus wrapt in weeds of sadness,
And mov'st as if thy steps were towards a grave ?
BELV. : A wretch, who from the very top of happiness
Am fallen into the lowest depths of misery,
And want your pitying hand to raise me up again.
PRIU. : Indeed thou talk'st as thou hadst tasted sorrows ;
Would I could help thee !
BELV. : 'Tis greatly in your power.
The world, too, speaks you charitable, and I,

Who ne'er asked alms before, in that dear hope
Am come a-begging to you, sir.

PRIU. : For what ?

BELV. : O well regard me, is this voice a strange one ?
Consider, too, when beggars once pretend
A case like mine, no little will content 'em.

PRIU. : What wouldst thou beg for ?

BELV. : Pity and forgiveness ; [*Throws up her veil.*
By the kind tender names of child and father,
Hear my complaints and take me to your love.

PRIU. : My daughter ?

BELV. : Yes, your daughter, by a mother
Virtuous and noble, faithful to your honour,
Obedient to your will, kind to your wishes,
Dear to your arms : by all the joys she gave you,
When in her blooming years she was your treasure,
Look kindly on me ; in my face behold
The lineaments of hers you've kiss'd so often,
Pleading the cause of your poor cast-off child.

PRIU. : Thou art my daughter ?

BELV. : Yes—and you've oft told me,
With smiles of love and chaste paternal kisses,
I'd much resemblance of my mother.

PRIU. : Oh !
Hadst thou inherited her matchless virtues
I'd been too bless'd.

BELV. : Nay, do not call to memory
My disobedience, but let pity enter
Into your heart, and quite deface the impression ;
For could you think how mine's perplexed, what sadness,
Fears and despairs distract the peace within me,
Oh, you would take me in your dear, dear arms,
Hover with strong compassion o'er your young one,
To shelter me with a protecting wing,
From the black gather'd storm, that's just, just breaking.

PRIU. : Don't talk thus.

BELV. : Yes, I must, and you must hear too.
I have a husband.

PRIU. : Damn him.

BELV. : Oh, do not curse him !
He would not speak so hard a word towards you,
On any terms, [howe'er] he deal with me.

PRIU. : Ha ! what means my child ?

BELV. : Oh, there's but this short moment
'Twixt me and Fate, yet send me not with curses
Down to my grave, afford me one kind blessing
Before we part : just take me in your arms,
And recommend me with a prayer to Heaven,
That I may die in peace, and when I'm dead——

PRIU. : How my soul's catched !

BELV. : Lay me, I beg you, lay me
By the dear ashes of my tender mother :
She would have pitied me, had Fate yet spared her.

PRIU. : By heaven, my aching heart forebodes much mischief ;
Tell me thy story, for I'm still thy father.
BELV. : No, I'm contented.
PRIU. : Speak.
BELV. : No matter.
PRIU. : Tell me.
By yon blest Heaven, my heart runs o'er with fondness.
BELV. : Oh !
PRIU. : Utter't.
BELV. : O my husband, my dear husband
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,
To pierce the heart of your poor Belvidera.
PRIU. : Kill thee ?
BELV. : Yes, kill me. When he pass'd his faith
And covenant, against your State and Senate,
He gave me up as hostage for his truth,
With me a dagger and a dire commission
Whene'er he failed, to plunge it through this bosom.
I learnt the danger, chose the hour of love
To attempt his heart, and bring it back to honour.
Great love prevail'd and bless'd me with success :
He came, confessed, betrayed his dearest friends
For promis'd mercy ; now they're doomed to suffer,
Gall'd with remembrance of what then was sworn,
If they are lost, he vows to appease the gods
With this poor life, and make my blood the atonement.
PRIU. : Heavens !
BELV. : Think you saw what pass'd at our last parting ;
Think you beheld him like a raging lion,
Pacing the earth and tearing up his steps,
Fate in his eyes, and roaring with the pain
Of burning fury ; think you saw his one hand
Fix'd on my throat, while the extended other,
Grasp'd a keen threat'ning dagger : oh, 'twas thus
We last embrac'd, when, trembling with revenge,
He dragg'd me to the ground, and at my bosom
Presented horrid death, cried out : " My friends,
Where are my friends ? " swore, wept, rag'd, threaten'd, lov'd,
For he yet loved, and that dear love preserved me,
To this last trial of a father's pity.
I fear not death, but cannot bear a thought
That that dear hand should do the unfriendly office ;
If I was ever then your care, now hear me ;
Fly to the Senate, save the promised lives
Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.
PRIU. : O my heart's comfort !
BELV. : Will you not, my father ?
Weep not, but answer me.
PRIU. : By Heaven, I will.
Not one of 'em but what shall be immortal.
Canst thou forgive me all my follies past,
I'll henceforth be indeed a father ; never,
Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,
Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life,

Dear as these eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee.
Peace to thy heart. Farewell.

BELV. : Go, and remember
'Tis Belvidera's life her father pleads for. [*Exeunt severally.*

Enter ANTONIO.

Hum, hum, ha,

Signor Priuli, my lord Priuli, my lord, my lord, my lord : [how] we lords love to call one another by our titles ! My lord, my lord, my lord—pox on him, I am a lord as well as he ; and so let him fiddle—I'll warrant him he's gone to the Senate-house, and I'll be there too, soon enough for somebody. 'Od, here's a tickling speech about the plot, I'll prove there's a plot with a vengeance—would I had it without book ; let me see—

Most reverend Senators,

That there is a plot, surely by this time, no man that hath eyes or understanding in his head will presume to doubt, 'tis as plain as the light in the cucumber—no—hold there—cucumber does not come in yet—'tis as plain as the light in the sun, or as the man in the moon, even at noonday ; it is indeed a pumpkin-plot, which, just as it was mellow, we have gathered, and now we have gathered it, prepared and dressed it, shall we throw it like a pickled cucumber out at the window ? no : that it is not only a bloody, horrid, execrable, damnable and audacious plot, but it is, as I may so say, a saucy plot : and we all know, most reverend fathers, that what is sauce for a goose is sauce for a gander : therefore, I say, as those bloodthirsty ganders of the conspiracy would have destroyed us geese of the Senate, let us make haste to destroy them, so I humbly move for hanging—ha! hurry durry—I think this will do, tho' I was something out, at first, about the sun and the cucumber.

Enter AQUILINA.

AQUIL. : Good-morrow, Senator.

ANTO. : Nacky, my dear Nacky, morrow, Nacky, 'od I am very brisk, very merry, very pert, very jovial—ha-a-a-a-a—kiss me, Nacky ; how dost thou do, my little Tory, rory strumpet, kiss me, I say, hussy, kiss me.

AQUIL. : Kiss me, Nacky, hang you, sir, coxcomb, hang you, sir.

ANTO. : Hayty, tayty, is it so indeed, with all my heart, faith—*hey then up go we*, faith—*hey then up go we*, dum dum derum dump. [*Sings.*

AQUIL. : Signior.

ANTO. : Madonna.

AQUIL. : Do you intend to die in your bed——?

ANTO. : About threescore years hence, much may be done, my dear.

AQUIL. : You'll be hanged, signior.

ANTO. : Hanged, sweetheart, prithee be quiet, hanged quotha, that's a merry conceit, with all my heart, why thou jok'st, Nacky, thou art given to joking, I'll swear ; well, I protest, Nacky, nay, I must protest, and will protest that I love joking dearly, man. And I love thee for joking, and I'll kiss thee for joking, and towse thee for joking, and 'od, I have a devilish mind to take thee aside about that business for joking too, 'od I have, and *Hey then up go we*, dum dum derum dump. [*Sings.*

AQUIL. : See you this, sir ? [*Draws a dagger.*

ANTO. : O Lud, a dagger ! O Lud ! it is naturally my aversion, I cannot endure the sight on't, hide it for Heaven's sake, I cannot look that way till it be gone—hide it, hide it, oh, oh, hide it !

AQUIL. : Yes, in your heart I'll hide it.

ANTO. : My heart ; what, hide a dagger in my heart's blood ?

AQUIL. : Yes, in thy heart, thy throat, thou pampered devil ;
Thou hast help'd to spoil my peace, and I'll have vengeance
On thy cursed life, for all the bloody Senate,
The perjur'd faithless Senate : where's my lord,
My happiness, my love, my god, my hero,
Doom'd by thy accursed tongue, amongst the rest,
T' a shameful wrack ? By all the rage that's in me
I'll be whole years in murthering thee.
ANTO. : Why, Nacky,
Wherefore so passionate ? what have I done ? what's the matter, my dear Nacky ? am not I thy love, thy happiness, thy lord, thy hero, thy Senator, and everything in the world, Nacky ?
AQUIL. : Thou ! think'st thou, thou art fit to meet my joys ;
To bear the eager clasps of my embraces ?
Give me my Pierre, or——
ANTO. : Why, he's to be hang'd, little Nacky,
Trussed up for treason, and so forth, child.
AQUIL. : Thou liest : stop down thy throat that hellish sentence,
Or 'tis thy last : swear that my love shall live,
Or thou art dead.
ANTO. : Ah-h-h-h.
AQUIL. : Swear to recall his doom,
Swear at my feet, and tremble at my fury.
ANTO. : I do. Now if she would but kick a little bit, one kick now.
Ah-h-h-h.
AQUIL. : Swear, or——
ANTO. : I do, by these dear fragrant foots
And little toes, sweet as, e-e-e-e my Nacky Nacky Nacky.
Aquil. How !
ANTO. : Nothing but untie thy shoe-string a little, faith and troth,
That's all, that's all, as I hope to live, Nacky, that's all.
AQUIL. : Nay, then——
ANTO. : Hold, hold, thy love, thy lord, thy hero
Shall be preserv'd and safe.
AQUIL. : Or may this poniard
Rust in thy heart.
ANTO. : With all my soul.
AQUIL. : Farewell—— [*Exit* AQUILINA.
ANTO. : Adieu. Why, what a bloody-minded, inveterate, termagant strumpet have I been plagued with ! Oh-h-h yet more ! nay then I die, I die— I am dead already. [*Stretches himself out.*

Enter JAFFEIR.

JAFF. : Final destruction seize on all the world :
Bend down, ye heavens, and shutting round this earth,
Crush the vile globe into its first confusion ;
Scorch it with elemental flames, to one curst cinder,
And all us little creepers in't, called men,
Burn, burn to nothing : but let Venice burn
Hotter than all the rest : here kindle hell
Ne'er to extinguish, and let souls hereafter
Groan here, in all those pains which mine feels now.

Enter BELVIDERA.

BELV. : My life—— [*Meeting him.*

JAFF. : My plague—— [*Turning from her.*
BELV. : Nay then I see my ruin
If I must die !
JAFF. : No, Death's this day too busy,
Thy father's ill-timed mercy came too late.
I thank thee for thy labours though and him too,
But all my poor betray'd unhappy friends
Have summons to prepare for Fate's black hour ;
And yet I live.
BELV. : Then be the next my doom.
I see thou'st pass'd my sentence in thy heart,
And I'll no longer weep or plead against it,
But with the humblest, most obedient patience
Meet thy dear hands, and kiss 'em when they wound me ;
Indeed I'm willing, but I beg thee do it
With some remorse, and where thou giv'st the blow,
View me with eye of a relenting love,
And show me pity, for 'twill sweeten justice.
JAFF. : Show pity to thee ?
BELV. : Yes, and when thy hands,
Charg'd with my fate, come trembling to the deed,
As thou hast done a thousand thousand dear times,
To this poor breast, when kinder rage has brought thee,
When our stinged hearts have leaped to meet each other,
And melting kisses sealed our lips together,
When joys have left me gasping in thy arms,
So let my death come now, and I'll not shrink from't.
JAFF. : Nay, Belvidera, do not fear my cruelty,
Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy fancy,
But answer me to what I shall demand
With a firm temper and unshaken spirit.
BELV. : I will when I've done weeping——
JAFF. : Fie, no more on't—
How long is't since the miserable day
We wedded first——
BELV. : Oh-h-h !
JAFF. : Nay, keep in thy tears,
Lest they unman me too.
BELV. : Heaven knows I cannot ;
The words you utter sound so very sadly
These streams will follow——
JAFF. : Come, I'll kiss 'em dry, then.
BELV. : But was't a miserable day ?
JAFF. : A curs'd one.
BELV. : I thought it otherwise, and you've oft sworn
In the transporting hours of warmest love
When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn you blessed it.
JAFF. : 'Twas a rash oath.
BELV. : Then why am I not curs'd too ?
JAFF. : No, Belvidera ; by the eternal truth,
I dote with too much fondness.
BELV. : Still so kind ?
Still then do you love me ?

JAFF. : Nature, in her workings,
Inclines not with more ardour to creation,
Than I do now towards thee : man ne'er was bless'd,
Since the first pair first met, as I have been.
BELV. : Then sure you will not curse me.
JAFF. : No, I'll bless thee.
I came on purpose, Belvidera, to bless thee.
'Tis now, I think, three years we've liv'd together.
BELV. : And may no fatal minute ever part us,
Till, reverend grown, for age and love, we go
Down to one grave, as our last bed, together,
There sleep in peace till an eternal morning.
JAFF. : When will that be ? [*Sighing.*
BELV. : I hope long ages hence.
JAFF. : Have I not hitherto (I beg thee tell me
Thy very fears) used thee with tender'st love ?
Did e'er my soul rise up in wrath against thee ?
Did e'er I frown when Belvidera smiled,
Or, by the least unfriendly word, betray
A bating passion ? have I ever wronged thee ?
BELV. : No.
JAFF. : Has my heart, or have my eyes e'er wandered
To any other woman ?
BELV. : Never, never—
I were the worst of false ones should I accuse thee ;
I own I've been too happy, bless'd above
My sex's charter.
JAFF. : Did I not say I came to bless thee ?
BELV. : Yes.
JAFF. : Then hear me, bounteous Heaven !
Pour down your blessings on this beauteous head,
Where everlasting sweets are always springing,
With a continual giving hand : let peace,
Honour, and safety, always hover round her :
Feed her with plenty, let her eyes ne'er see
A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning :
Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest,
Harmless as her own thoughts ; and prop her virtue,
To bear the loss of one that too much lov'd,
And comfort her with patience in our parting.
BELV. : How, parting ! parting !
JAFF. : Yes, for ever parting.
I have sworn, Belvidera, by yon heaven,
That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,
We part this hour for ever.
BELV. : Oh, call back
Your cruel blessings, stay with me and curse me !
JAFF. : No, 'tis resolv'd.
BELV. : Then hear me too, just Heaven !
Pour down your curses on this wretched head
With never-ceasing vengeance : let despair,
Danger or infamy, nay, all surround me :
Starve me with wantings : let my eyes ne'er see
A sight of comfort, nor my heart know peace,

But dash my days with sorrow, night with horrors
Wild as my own thoughts now, and let loose fury
To make me mad enough for what I lose,
If I must lose him ; if I must, I will not.
O turn and hear me !

JAFF. : Now hold, heart, or never.

BELV. : By all the tender days we've liv'd together ;
By all our charming nights, and joys that crown'd 'em :
Pity my sad condition, speak, but speak.

JAFF. : Oh-h-h !

BELV. : By these arms that now cling round thy neck :
By this dear kiss and by ten thousand more,
By these poor streaming eyes——

JAFF. : Murther ! unhold me : [*Draws his dagger.*
By the immortal destiny that doom'd me
To this curs'd minute, I'll not live one longer.
Resolve to let me go or see me fall——

BELV. : Hold, sir, be patient.

JAFF. : Hark, the dismal bell [*Passing bell tolls.*
Tolls out for death ; I must attend its call too
For my poor friend, my dying Pierre expects me :
He sent a message to require I'd see him
Before he died and take his last forgiveness.
Farewell for ever. [*Going out looks back at her.*

BELV. : Leave thy dagger with me.
Bequeath me something.—Not one kiss at parting ?
O my poor heart, when wilt thou break ?

JAFF. : Yet stay,
We have a child, as yet a tender infant,
Be a kind mother to him when I am gone :
Breed him in virtue and the paths of honour,
But let him never know his father's story :
I charge thee guard him from the wrongs my fate
May do his future fortune or his name.
Now—nearer yet— [*Approaching each other.*
O that my arms were riveted
Thus round thee ever ! But my friends, my oath !
This and no more. [*Kisses her.*

BELV. : Another, sure another,
For that poor little one you've ta'en care of,
I'll give't him truly.

JAFF. : So, now farewell.

BELV. : For ever ?

JAFF. : Heaven knows for ever ; all good angels guard thee.
[*Exit.*

BELV. : All ill ones sure had charge of me this moment.
Curs'd be my days, and doubly curs'd my nights,
Which I must now mourn out in widow'd tears ;
Blasted be every herb and fruit and tree ;
Curs'd be the rain that falls upon the earth,
And may the general curse reach man and beast ;
Oh, give me daggers, fire or water !
How I could bleed, how burn, how drown, the waves
Huzzing and booming round my sinking head,

Till I descended to the peaceful bottom !
Oh, there's all quiet, here all rage and fury :
The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain :
I long for thick substantial sleep : hell, hell,
Burst from the centre, rage and roar aloud,
If thou art half so hot, so mad as I am.

Enter PRIULI *and* SERVANTS.

Who's there ? [*They seize her.*
PRIU. : Run, seize and bring her safely home.
Guard her as you would life : alas, poor creature !
BELV. : What ? to my husband then conduct me quickly.
Are all things ready ? shall we die most gloriously ?
Say not a word of this to my old father.
Murmuring streams, soft shades, and springing flowers,
Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber. [*Exit.*

SCENE II

Scene opening discovers a Scaffold and a Wheel prepared for the executing of PIERRE, *then enter other* OFFICERS, PIERRE *and* GUARDS, *a* FRIAR, EXECUTIONER, *and a great rabble.*

OFFIC. : Room, room there—stand all by, make room for the prisoner.
PIERR. : My friend not come yet ?
FATH. : Why are you so obstinate ?
PIERR. : Why you so troublesome, that a poor wretch
Can't die in peace,
But you, like ravens, will be croaking round him ?
FATH. : Yet, Heaven——
PIERR. : I tell thee Heaven and I are friends.
I ne'er broke peace with't yet, by cruel murthers,
Rapine or perjury, or vile deceiving,
But lived in moral justice towards all men,
Nor am a foe to the most strong believers,
Howe'er my own short-sighted faith confine me.
FATH. : But an all-seeing Judge——
PIERR. : You say my conscience
Must be mine accuser : I've search'd that conscience,
And find no records there of crimes that scare me.
FATH. : 'Tis strange you should want faith.
PIERR. : You want to lead
My reason blindfold, like a hamper'd lion,
Check'd of its noble vigour ; then, when baited
Down to obedient tameness, make it couch,
And show strange tricks, which you call signs of faith.
So silly souls are gull'd and you get money.
Away, no more : Captain, I would hereafter
This fellow write no lies of my conversion,
Because he has crept upon my troubled hours.

Enter JAFFEIR.

JAFF. : Hold : eyes, be dry !
Heart, strengthen me to bear

This hideous sight, and humble me, to take
The last forgiveness of a dying friend,
Betray'd by my vile falsehood, to his ruin.
O Pierre !

PIERR. : Yet nearer.

JAFF. : Crawling on my knees,
And prostrate on the earth, let me approach thee :
How shall I look up to thy injured face,
That always used to smile, with friendship on me ?
It darts an air of so much manly virtue,
That I, methinks, look little in thy sight,
And stripes are fitter for me than embraces.

PIERR. : Dear to my arms, though thou'st undone my fame,
I cannot forget to love thee ; prithee, Jaffeir,
Forgive that filthy blow my passion dealt thee ;
I'm now preparing for the land of peace,
And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men, like thee, to bless my journey.

JAFF. : Good ! I am the vilest creature ; worse than e'er
Suffer'd the shameful fate thou'rt going to taste of.
Why was I sent for to be used thus kindly ?
Call, call me villain, as I am, describe
The foul complexion of my hateful deeds,
Lead me to the rack, and stretch me in thy stead,
I've crimes enough to give it its full load,
And do it credit. Thou wilt but spoil the use on't,
And honest men hereafter bear its figure
About 'em, as a charm from treacherous friendship.

OFFIC. : The time grows short, your friends are dead already.

JAFF. : Dead !

PIERR. : Yes, dead, Jaffeir, they've all died like men too,
Worthy their character.

JAFF. : And what must I do ?

PIERR. : O Jaffeir !

JAFF. : Speak aloud thy burthen'd soul,
And tell thy troubles to thy tortured friend.

PIERR. : Couldst thou yet be a friend, a generous friend,
I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.
Heav'n knows I want a friend.

JAFF : And I a kind one,
That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,
Or think when he's to die, my thoughts are idle.

PIERR. : No ! live, I charge thee, Jaffeir.

JAFF. : Yes, I'll live,
But it shall be to see thy fall revenged
At such a rate, as Venice long shall groan for.

PIERR. : Wilt thou ?

JAFF. : I will, by Heav'n.

PIERR. : Then still thou'rt noble,
And I forgive thee, oh—yet—shall I trust thee ?

JAFF. : No : I've been false already.

PIERR. : Dost thou love me ?

JAFF. : Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubtings.

PIERR. : Curse on this weakness. [*He weeps.*

JAFF. : Tears ! Amazement ! Tears !
I never saw thee melted thus before,
And know there's something labouring in thy bosom
That must have vent : though I'm a villain, tell me.
PIERR. : Seest thou that engine ? [*Pointing to the Wheel.*
JAFF. : Why ?
PIERR. : Is't fit a soldier, who has liv'd with honour,
Fought nations' quarrels, and been crown'd with conquest,
Be exposed a common carcase on a wheel ?
JAFF. : Ha !
PIERR. : Speak ! is't fitting ?
JAFF. : Fitting ?
PIERR. : Yes, is't fitting ?
JAFF. : What's to be done ?
PIERR. : I'd have thee undertake
Something that's noble, to preserve my memory
From the disgrace that's ready to attaint it.
OFFIC. : The day grows late, sir.
PIERR. : I'll make haste ! O Jaffeir,
Though thou'st betray'd me, do me some way justice.
JAFF. : No more of that : thy wishes shall be satisfied.
I have a wife, and she shall bleed, my child too
Yield up his little throat, and all t' appease thee——
[*Going away,* PIERRE *holds him.*
PIERR. : No—this—no more ! [*He whispers* JAFFEIR.
JAFF. : Ha ! is't then so ?
PIERR. : Most certainly.
JAFF. : I'll do't.
PIERR. : Remember.
OFFIC. : Sir.
PIERR. : Come, now I'm ready.
[*He and* JAFFEIR *ascend the scaffold.*
Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour.
Keep off the rabble, that I may have room
To entertain my fate and die with decency.
Come ! [*Takes off his gown,* EXECUTIONER *prepares to bind him.*
FATH. : Son !
PIERR. : Hence, tempter.
OFFIC. : Stand off, priest.
PIERR. : I thank you, sir.
You'll think on't. [*To* JAFFEIR.
JAFF. : 'Twon't grow stale before to-morrow.
PIERR. : Now, Jaffeir ! now I am going. Now ;—
[EXECUTIONER *having bound him.*
JAFF. : Have at thee,
Thou honest heart, then—here— [*Stabs him.*
And this is well too. [*Then stabs himself.*
FATH. Damnable deed !
PIERR. : Now thou hast indeed been faithful.
This was done nobly—we've deceived the Senate.
JAFF. : Bravely.
PIERR. : Ha ! ha ! ha !—oh ! oh !—— [*Dies.*
JAFF. : Now, you curs'd rulers,
Thus of the blood ye've shed I make libation,

And sprinkle it mingling : may it rest upon you,
And all your race : be henceforth peace a stranger
Within your walls ; let plagues and famine waste
Your generations—O poor Belvidera !
Sir, I have a wife, bear this in safety to her.
A token that with my dying breath I blessed her,
And the dear little infant left behind me.
I'm sick—I'm quiet—— [JAFFEIR *dies.*

OFFIC. : Bear this news to the Senate,
And guard their bodies till there's farther order :
Heaven grant I die so well ! [*Scene shuts upon them.*

Soft music. Enter BELVIDERA *distracted, led by two of her women,* PRIULI *and* SERVANTS.

PRIU. : Strengthen her heart with patience, pitying Heaven.

BELV. : Come come come come come, nay, come to bed !
Prithee my love. The winds ! hark how they whistle !
And the rain beats : oh, how the weather shrinks me !
You are angry now, who cares ? pish, no indeed.
Choose then, I say, you shall not go, you shall not ;
Whip your ill nature ; get you gone then ! oh,
[JAFFEIR'S *ghost rises.*
Are you return'd ? See, father, here he's come again !
Am I to blame to love him ? O thou dear one ! [*Ghost sinks.*
Why do you fly me ? are you angry still, then ?
Jaffeir ! where art thou ? Father, why do you do thus ?
Stand off, don't hide him from me. He's here somewhere.

Enter OFFICER *and others.*

Stand off, I say ! what, gone ? remember't Tyrant !
I may revenge myself for this trick one day.
I'll do't—I'll do't ! Renault's a nasty fellow.
Hang him, hang him, hang him.

PRIU. : News, what news ? [OFFICER *whispers* PRIULI.

OFFIC. : Most sad, sir.
Jaffeir, upon the scaffold, to prevent
A shameful death, stabb'd Pierre, and next himself :
Both fell together.
[*The ghosts of* JAFFEIR *and* PIERRE *rise together, both bloody.*

PRIU. : Daughter.

BELV. : Ha, look there !
My husband bloody, and his friend too ! Murther !
Who has done this ? speak to me, thou sad vision.
[*Ghosts sink.*
On these poor trembling knees I beg it. Vanish'd !
Here they went down ; oh, I'll dig, dig the den up.
You shan't delude me thus. Ho, Jaffeir, Jaffeir,
Peep up and give me but a look. I have him !
I've got him, father : oh, how I'll s[n]uggle him !
My love ! my dear ! my blessing ! help me, help me !
They've hold on me, and drag me to the bottom.
Nay—now they pull so hard—farewell—— [*She dies.*

MAID : She's dead.
Breathless and dead.
PRIU. : Then guard me from the sight on't ;
Lead me into some place that's fit for mourning ;
Where the free air, light, and the cheerful sun
May never enter : hang it round with black :
Set up one taper that may last a day
As long as I've to live : and there leave me.
Sparing no tears when you this tale relate,
But bid all cruel fathers dread my fate.
[*Curtain falls. Exeunt omnes.*

1697

THE PROVOKED WIFE

(By SIR JOHN VANBRUGH)

The neo-Elizabethans, as we have called them, did not achieve much beyond *Venice Preserved* and one or two other bloody plays. For the purposes of drama, the Restoration is chiefly notable for its Comedy of Manners. Here was French influence, indeed, (Molière's), more discreetly merging into the inheritance of Ben Jonson and Fletcher. It preserved the classic unities, it was aristocratic in its *dramatis personæ* and its tone, but its spirit belonged to the Freedom and roast beef of Old England. Modern drama is seen in the making. We have retained the form, we have improved on the matter, but we have lost the literary grace, the style. Many would say we have lost more than we have gained.

The Comedy of Manners originated with Etherage (1636–1694), who was followed by Wycherley (1640-1715), the most indecent if not the most brilliant member of the circle. Sir John Vanbrugh (1666–1715), whose best play is here reproduced, portrayed a more robust side of this singular mannered society. It is fascinating as is anything that conveys the "sense of the past." Also it is great fun. But the inhumanity of the point of view holds us at a distance.

Vanbrugh was a man of two careers, a great architect, as well as the writer of "great" plays.

THE PROVOKED WIFE

Characters

LORD RAKE	HEARTFREE	LADY BRUTE	MADEMOISELLE
SIR JOHN BRUTE	CONSTANT	LADY FANCIFUL	CORNET
COLONEL BULLY	RAZOR	BELINDA	SERVANTS

ACT I

SCENE I.—SIR JOHN BRUTE'S *House*

Enter SIR JOHN BRUTE.

SIR J. : What cloying meat is love, when matrimony's the sauce to it ! Two years' marriage has debauched my five senses. Everything I see, everything

I hear, everything I feel, everything I smell, and everything I taste, methinks has wife in't. No boy was ever so weary of his tutor, no girl of her bib, no nun of doing penance, or old maid of being chaste, as I am of being married. Sure, there's a secret curse entailed upon the very name of wife. My lady is a young lady, a fine lady, a witty lady, a virtuous lady, and yet, I hate her. There is but one thing on earth I loath beyond her, that's fighting. Would my courage come up to a fourth part of my ill-nature, I'd stand buff to her relations, and thrust her out of doors. But marriage has sunk me down to such an ebb of resolution, I dare not draw my sword, though even to get rid of my wife. But here she comes.

Enter LADY BRUTE.

LADY B. : Do you dine at home to-day, Sir John ?

SIR J. : Why ? Do you expect I should tell you what I don't know myself ?

LADY B. : I thought there was no harm in asking you.

SIR J. : If thinking wrong were an excuse for impertinence, women might be justified in most things they say or do.

LADY B. : I am sorry I have said anything to displease you.

SIR J. : Sorrow for things past, is of as little importance to me, as my dining at home or abroad ought to be to you.

LADY B. : My inquiry was only that I might have provided what you liked.

SIR J. : Six to four you had been in the wrong there again ; for what I liked yesterday I don't like to-day, and what I like to-day, 'tis odds I mayn't like to-morrow.

LADY B. : But if I had asked you what you liked ?

SIR J. : Why, then, there would be more asking about it than the thing is worth.

LADY B. : I wish I did but know how I might please you.

SIR J. : Ay, but that sort of knowledge is not a wife's talent.

LADY B. : Whatever my talent is, I'm sure my will has ever been to make you easy.

SIR J. : If women were to have their wills, the world would be finely governed.

LADY B. : What reason have I given you to use me as you do of late ? It once was otherwise : you married me for love.

SIR J. : And you me for money : so you have your reward, and I have mine.

LADY B. : What is it that disturbs you ?

SIR J. : A parson.

LADY B. : Why, what has he done to you ?

SIR J. : He has married me and be d——d to him ! [*Exit.*

LADY B. : The devil's in the fellow, I think. I was told before I married him, that thus 'twould be. The surly puppy ! Yet, he's a fool for it : for hitherto, he has been no monster : but who knows how far he may provoke me ? Or, who can tell ? perhaps, a good part of what I suffer from my husband may be a judgment upon me for my cruelty to my lover. But hold ! let me go no further : I think I have a right to alarm this surly brute of mine : but, if I know my heart, it will never let me go so far as to injure him.

Enter BELINDA.

Good-morrow, dear cousin.

BEL. : Good-morrow, madam ; you look pleased this morning.

LADY B. : I am so.

BEL. : With what, pray ?

LADY B. : With my husband.

BEL. : Drown husbands ! for your's is a provoking fellow : as he went out just now, I prayed him to tell me what time of day 'twas ; and he asked me if I took him for the church clock, that was obliged to tell all the parish.

LADY B. : He has been saying some good obliging things to me, too. In short, Belinda, he has used me so barbarously of late, that I could almost resolve to play the downright wife and cuckold him.

BEL. : That would be downright, indeed.

LADY B. : Why, after all, there's more to be said for't than you'd imagine, child. He is the first aggressor, not I.

BEL. : Ah ! but, you know, we must return good for evil.

LADY B. : That may be a mistake in the translation. Pr'ythee, be of my opinion, Belinda ; for I'm positive I'm in the right ; and if you'll keep up the prerogative of a woman, you'll likewise be positive you are in the right, whenever you do anything you have a mind to. But I shall play the fool, and jest on, till I make you begin to think I am in earnest.

BEL. : I shan't take the liberty, madam, to think of anything that you desire to keep a secret from me.

LADY B. : Alas ! my dear, I have no secrets. My heart could never yet confine my tongue.

BEL. : Your eyes, you mean ; for I am sure I have seen them gadding, when your tongue has been locked up safe enough.

LADY B. : My eyes gadding ! Pr'ythee, after who, child ?

BEL. : Why, after one that thinks you hate him, as much as I know you love him.

LADY B. : Constant, you mean ?

BEL. : I do so.

LADY B. : Lord ! what should put such a thing into your head.

BEL. : That which puts things into most people's heads,—observation.

LADY B. : Why, what have you observed, in the name of wonder ?

BEL. : I have observed you blush when you met him ; force yourself away from him ; and then be out of humour with everything about you : in a word, never was a poor creature so spurred on by desire, or so reined in with fear.

LADY B. : How strong is fancy !

BEL. : How weak is woman !

LADY B. : Pr'ythee, niece, have a better opinion of your aunt's inclination.

BEL. : Dear aunt, have a better opinion of your niece's understanding.

LADY B. : You'll make me angry.

BEL. : You'll make me laugh.

LADY B. : Then you are resolved to persist ?

BEL. : Positively.

LADY B. : And all I can say——

BEL. : Will signify nothing.

LADY B. : Though I should swear 'twere false——

BEL. : I should think it true.

LADY B. : Then let us forgive ; (*kissing her*) for we have both offended : I, in making a secret ; you in discovering it.

BEL. : Good-nature may do much : but you have more reason to forgive one, than I have to pardon t'other.

LADY B. : 'Tis true, Belinda, you have given me so many proofs of your friendship, that my reserve has been, indeed, a crime ; and, as a proof of my repentance, I own, Belinda, I am in danger. But whatever you may have

observed, I have dissembled so well as to keep him ignorant. So, you see, I'm no coquet, Belinda. For 'tis an unreasonable thing to engage a man in a disease, which we beforehand resolve we will never apply a cure to.

BEL. : 'Tis true ; but, then, a woman must abandon one of the supreme blessings of her life. For I am fully convinced, no man has half that pleasure in gallanting a mistress, as a woman has in jilting a gallant.

LADY B. : The happiest woman, then, on earth must be our neighbour.

BEL. : Oh ! the impertinent composition ! She has vanity and affectation enough to make her a ridiculous original.

LADY B. : She concludes all men her captives ; and whatever course they take, it serves to confirm her in that opinion.

BEL. : If they shun her, she thinks 'tis modesty, and takes it for a proof of their passion.

LADY B. : And if they are rude to her, 'tis conduct, and done to prevent town-talk.

BEL. : All their actions and their words, she takes for granted, aim at her.

LADY B. : And pities all other women, because she thinks they envy her.

BEL. : Pray, out of pity to ourselves, let us find a better subject, for I'm weary of this. Do you think your husband inclined to jealousy ?

LADY B. : Oh ! no ; he does not love me well enough for that. Lord ! how wrong men's maxims are ! They are seldom jealous of their wives, unless they are very fond of them : whereas, they ought to consider the women's inclinations, for there depends their fate. Well, men may talk ; but they are not so wise as we : that's certain.

BEL. : At least in our affairs.

LADY B. : Nay, I believe we should outdo them in the business of the state, too : for, methinks, they do and undo, and make but bad work on't.

BEL. : Why, then, don't we get into the intrigues of government, as well as they ?

LADY B. : Because we have intrigues of our own, that make us more sport, child. And so, let's in and consider of them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Dressing Room.*

LADY FANCIFUL, MADEMOISELLE, *and* CORNET, *discovered.*

LADY F. : How do I look this morning ?

COR. : Your ladyship looks very ill, truly.

LADY F. : Lard ! how ill-natured thou art, Cornet, to tell me so, though the thing should be true. Don't you know, that I have humility enough to be but too easily out of conceit with myself ? Hold the glass : I dare say that will have more manners than you have. Mademoiselle, let me have your opinion too.

MADEM. : My opinion pe, matam, dat your ladyship never look so well in your life.

LADY F. : Well, the French are the prettiest, obliging people ! they say the most acceptable, well-mannered things—and never flatter.

MADEM. : Your ladyship say great justice, inteed.

LADY F. : Nay, everything is just in my house, but Cornet. The very looking-glass gives her the dementi. But I'm almost afraid it flatters me, it makes me look so engaging. [*Looking affectedly in the glass.*

MADEM. : Inteed, matam, your face pe handsomer den all de looking-glass in de world, croyez moi.

LADY F. : But is it possible my eyes can be so languishing, and so very full of fire ?

MADEM. : Matam, if de glass was burning-glass, I believe your eyes set de fire in de house.

LADY F. : You may take that night-gown, mademoiselle. Get out of the room, Cornet. I can't endure you. [*Exit* CORNET.] This wench, methinks, does look so insufferably ugly !

MADEM. : Everyting look ugly, matam, dat stand by your latyship.

LADY F. : No, really, mademoiselle, methinks you look mighty pretty.

MADEM. : Ah ! matam, de moon have no eclat, ven de sun appear.

LADY F. : Oh ! pretty expression ! Nave you ever been in love, mademoiselle ?

MADEM. : Oui, matam. [*Sighing.*

LADY F. : And were you beloved again ?

MADEM. : No, matam.

LADY F. : Oh ! ye gods ! what an unfortunate creature should I be in such a case ! But nature has made me nice, for my own defence ; I am nice, strangely nice, mademoiselle : I believe, were the merit of whole mankind bestowed upon one single person, I should still think the fellow wanted something to make it worth my while to take notice of him ; and yet, I could love, nay, fondly love, were it possible to have a thing made on purpose for me, for I am not cruel, mademoiselle ; I am only nice.

MADEM. : Ah ! matam, I wish I was fine gentleman, for your sake. I do all de ting in de world to get a little way into your heart. I make song, I make verse, I give you de serenade, I give great many present to mademoiselle ; I no eat, I no sleep, I be lean, I be mad, I hang myself, I drown myself. Ah ! ma chère dame, que je vous aimerois ! [*Embracing her.*

LADY F. : Well, the French have strange, obliging ways with them ; you may take those two pair of gloves, mademoiselle.

MADEM. : Me humbly tank my sweet lady.

Enter a SERVANT *with a letter.*

SERV. : Madam, here's a letter for your ladyship. [*Exit.*

LADY F. : 'Tis thus I am importuned every morning, mademoiselle. Pray, how do the French ladies, when they are thus accablées ?

MADEM. : Matam, dey never complain. Au contraire, when one Frense laty have got a hundred lover, den she do all she can to get a hundred more.

LADY F. : Well, let me die, I think they have le bon goat. For 'tis an unutterable pleasure to be adored by all the men, and envied by all the women. Yet, I'll swear, I'm concerned at the torture I give them. Lard ! why was I formed to make the whole creation uneasy ? But let me read my letter. (*Reads.*) " If you have a mind to hear of your faults, instead of being praised for your virtues, take the pains to walk in the Green Walk in St. James's Park, with your woman, an hour hence. You'll there meet one, who hates you for some things, as he could love you for others ; and, therefore, is willing to endeavour your reformation. If you come to the place I mention, you'll know who I am ; if you don't, you never shall : so take your choice." This is strangely familiar, mademoiselle ! now have I a provoking fancy to know who this impudent fellow is.

MADEM. : Den take your scarf and your mask, and go to de rendezvous. De Frense laty do justement comme ça.

LADY F. : Rendezvous ! What, rendezvous with a man, mademoiselle ?

MADEM. : Eh ! pourquoi non ?

LADY F. : What, and a man, perhaps, I never saw in my life !

MADEM. : Tant mieux : c'est, donc, quelque chose de nouveau.

LADY F. : Why, how do I know what designs he may have ? He may intend to ravish me, for aught I know.

MADEM. : Ravish ! Bagatelle ! I would fain see one impudent rogue ravish mademoiselle. Oui, je le voudrois.

LADY F. : Oh ! but my reputation, mademoiselle, my reputation : ah ! ma chère reputation !

MADEM. : Matam, quand on l'a une fois perdus, on n'en est plus embarrassée.

LADY F. : Fie ! mademoiselle, fie ! reputation is a jewel.

MADEM. : Qui coute bien chère, matam.

LADY F. : Why, sure, you would not sacrifice your honour to your pleasure.

MADEM. : Je suis philosophe.

LADY F. : Bless me, how you talk ! Why, what if honour be a burden, mademoiselle, must it not be borne ?

MADEM. : Chacun a sa façon. Quand quelque chose m'incommode moi, je m'en defais vite.

LADY F. : Get you gone, you little naughty Frenchwoman, you ! I vow and swear I must turn you out of doors, if you talk thus.

MADEM. : Turn me out of doors ! turn yourself out of doors, and go see what de gentleman have to say to you. Tenez ! Voilà (*giving her her things hastily*) votre esharp, votre coife, votre masque, voilà tout. Hey ! mercure, coquin ! call one chair for matam, and one oder (*calling within*) for me. Va-t-en vite. (*Turning to her lady, and helping her on hastily with her things.*) Allons, matam ! depêchez vous, donc. Mon dieu ! quelles scruples !

LADY F. : Well, for once, mademoiselle, I'll follow your advice, out of the intemperate desire I have to know who this ill-bred fellow is. But I have too much delicatesse to make a practice on't.

MADEM. : Belle chose, vraiment, que la delicatesse, lorsqu'il s'agit de divertir—a ça. Vous voilà équipée, partons. Hé bien ! qu'avez vous, donc ?

LADY F. Jai peur.

MADEM. : Je n'en ai point moi.

LADY F. : I dare not go.

MADEM. : Démeurez donc.

LADY F. : Je suis poltrone.

MADEM. : Tant pis pour vous

LADY F. : Curiosity's a wicked devil.

MADEM. : C'est une charmante sainte.

LADY F. : It ruined our first parents.

MADEM. : Elle a bien diverti leurs enfans.

LADY F. : L'honneur est contre.

MADEM : Le plaisir est pour.

LADY F. : Must I then go ?

MADEM. : Must you go ! Must you eat, must you drink, must you sleep, must you live ? De nature bid you do one, de nature bid you do toder. Vous me ferez enrager.

LADY F. : But when reason corrects nature, mademoiselle——

MADEM. : Elle est, donc, bien insolente, c'est sa sœur ainèe.

LADY F. : Do you, then, prefer your nature to your reason, mademoiselle ?

MADEM. : Oui, da.

LADY F. : Pourquoi ?

MADEM. : Because my nature make me merry, my reason make me mad.

LADY F. : Ah ! la mèchante Françoise !

MADEM. : Ah ! la belle Angloise ! [*Exit, forcing* LADY F. *off.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*St. James's Park.*

Enter LADY FANCIFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

LADY F. : Well, I vow, mademoiselle, I am strangely impatient to know who this confident fellow is.

Enter HEARTFREE.

Look ! there's Heartfree. But, sure, it can't be him : he's a professed woman-hater. Yet who knows what my wicked eyes may have done ?

MADEM. : Il nous approche, matam.

LADY F. : Yes, 'tis he ; now will he be most intolerably cavalier, though he should be in love with me.

HEART. : Madam, I'm your humble servant. I perceive you have more humility and good-nature than I thought you had.

LADY F. : What you attribute to humility and good-nature, sir, may, perhaps, be only due to curiosity. I had a mind to know who 'twas had ill manners enough to write that letter. [*Throwing him the letter.*

HEART. : Well, and now I hope you are satisfied ?

LADY F. : I am so, sir ; good b'ye.

HEART. : Nay, hold there ! though you have done your business, I haven't done mine : by your ladyship's leave, we must have one moment's prattle together. Have you a mind to be the prettiest woman about town or not ? How she stares upon me ! What, this passes for an impertinent question with you now, because you think you are so already ?

LADY F. : Pray, sir, let me ask you a question in my turn : by what right do you pretend to examine me ?

HEART. : By the same right that the strong govern the weak, because I have you in my power ; for you cannot get so quickly to your coach, but I shall have time enough to make you hear everything I have to say to you.

LADY F. : These are strange liberties you take, Mr. Heartfree.

HEART. : They are so, madam, but there's no help for it ; for, know, that I have a design upon you.

LADY F. : Upon me, sir ?

HEART. : Yes, and one that will turn to your glory and my comfort, if you will be but a little wiser than you use to be.

LADY F. : Very well, sir.

HEART. : Let me see : your vanity, madam, I take to be about some eight degrees higher than any woman's in the town, let t'other be who she will ; and my indifference is naturally about the same pitch. Now, could you find the way to turn this indifference into fire and flame, methinks, your vanity ought to be satisfied : and this, perhaps, you might bring about upon pretty reasonable terms.

LADY F. : And, pray, at what rate would this indifference be bought off, if one should have so depraved an appetite to desire it ?

HEART. : Why, madam, to drive a quaker's bargain, and make but one word with you, if I do part with it, you must lay down your affectation.

LADY F. : My affectation, sir !

HEART. : Why, I ask you nothing but what you may very well spare.

LADY F. : You grow rude, sir. Come, mademoiselle, it is high time to be gone.

MADEM. : Allons, allons, allons !

HEART (*stopping them*) : Nay, you may as well stand still : for hear me you shall, walk which way you please.

LADY F. : What mean you, sir ?

HEART. : I mean to tell you that you are the most ungrateful woman upon earth.

LADY F. : Ungrateful ! To whom ?

HEART. : To nature.

LADY F. : Why, what has nature done for me ?

HEART. : What you have undone by art. It made you handsome ; it gave you beauty to a miracle, a shape without a fault, wit enough to make them relish, and so turned you loose to your own discretion, which has made such work with you, that you are become the pity of our sex, and the jest of your own. There is not a feature in your face, but you have found the way to teach it some affected convulsion ; your feet, your hands, your very fingers' ends, are directed never to move without some ridiculous air or other ; and your language is a suitable trumpet, to draw people's eyes upon the raree-show.

MADEM. (*aside*) : Est ce qu'on fait l'amour en Angleterre comme ça ?

LADY F. (*aside*) : Now I could cry for madness, but that I know he'd laugh at me for it.

HEART. : Now do you hate me for telling you the truth, but that's because you don't believe 'tis so ; for were you once convinced of that, you'd reform for your own sake.

LADY F. : Every circumstance of nice breeding must needs appear ridiculous to one who has so natural an antipathy to good manners.

HEART. : But suppose I could find the means to convince you that the whole world is of my opinion ?

LADY F. : Sir, though you, and all the world you talk of, should be so impertinently officious as to think to persuade me I don't know how to behave myself, I should still have charity enough for my own understanding to believe myself in the right, and all you in the wrong.

MADEM. : Le voilà mort. [*Exit with* LADY F.

HEART. (*gazing at her*) : There her single clapper has published the sense of the whole sex. Well, this once I have endeavoured to wash the blackmoor white, but, henceforward, I'll sooner undertake to teach sincerity to a courtier, generosity to a usurer, honesty to a lawyer, than discretion to a woman I see has once set her heart upon playing the fool.

Enter CONSTANT.

'Morrow, Constant.

CON. : Good-morrow, Jack. What are you doing here this morning ?

HEART. : Doing ! guess, if you can. Why, I have been endeavouring to persuade my Lady Fanciful that she's the most foolish woman about town.

CON. : A pretty endeavour, truly !

HEART. : I have told her, in as plain English as I could speak, both what the town says of her, and what I think of her. In short, I have used her as an absolute king would do magna charta.

CON. : And how does she take it ?

HEART. : As children do pills ; bite them, but can't swallow them.

CON. : But, pr'ythee, what has put it into your head, of all mankind, to turn reformer ?

HEART. : Why, one thing was, the morning hung upon my hands ; I did not know what to do with myself ; and another was, that as little as I care for

women, I could not see with patience one that heaven had taken such wondrous pains about, be so very industrious to make herself the Jack-pudding of the creation.

CON. : Well, now I could almost wish to see my cruel mistress make the self-same use of what heaven has done for her ; that so I might be cured of the same disease that makes me so very uneasy ; for love, love is the devil, Heartfree.

HEART. : And why do you let the devil govern you ?

CON. Because I have more flesh and blood than grace and self-denial. My dear, dear mistress—'Sdeath ! that so genteel a woman should be a saint, when religion's out of fashion !

HEART. : Nay, she's much in the wrong, truly ; but who knows how far time and good example may prevail ?

CON. : Oh ! they have played their parts in vain already ; 'tis now two years since the fellow her husband invited me to his wedding ; and there was the first time I saw that charming woman, whom I have loved ever since ; but she is cold, my friend, still cold as the northern star.

HEART. : So are all women by nature, which maketh them so willing to be warmed.

CON. : Oh ! don't profane the sex : pr'ythee, think them all angels for her sake ; for she's virtuous even to a fault.

HEART. : A lover's head is a good accountable thing, truly ! he adores his mistress for being virtuous, and yet, is very angry with her, because she won't be kind.

CON. : Well, the only relief I expect in my misery is to see thee some day or other as deeply engaged as myself, which will force me to be merry in the midst of all my misfortunes.

HEART. : That day will never come, be assured, Ned. But, pr'ythee, let me tell you how I avoid falling in love ; that which serves me for prevention may chance to serve you for a cure.

CON. : Well, use the ladies moderately, then, and I'll hear you.

HEART. : That using them moderately undoes us all : but I'll use them justly, and that you ought to be satisfied with. I always consider a woman, not as the tailor, the shoe-maker, the tire-woman, the sempstress and (which is more than all that), the poet makes her ; but I consider her as pure nature has contrived her, and that more strictly than I should have done our old grandmother Eve, had I seen her naked in the garden ; for I consider her turned inside out. Her heart well examined, I find there pride, vanity, covetousness, indiscretion ; but above all things, malice : plots eternally forging to destroy one another's reputations, and as honestly to charge the levity of men's tongues with the scandal ; hourly debates how to make poor gentlemen in love with them, with no other intent but to use them like dogs when they have done ; a constant desire of doing more mischief, and an everlasting war waged against truth and good-nature.

CON. : Very well, sir, an admirable composition truly !

HEART. : Then for her outside, I consider it merely as an outside : she has a thin, tiffany covering ; just over such stuff as you and I are made of. As for her motion, her mien, her airs, and all those tricks, I know they affect you mightily. If you should see your mistress at a coronation, dragging her peacock's train, with all her state and insolence about her, 'twould strike you with all the awful thoughts that heaven itself could pretend to form you : whereas, I turn the whole matter into a jest, and suppose her strutting, in the self-same stately manner, with nothing on but her stays, and her scanty quilted under-petticoat.

CON. : Hold thy profane tongue ; for I'll hear no more.
HEART. : What, you'll love on, then ?
CON. : Yes.
HEART. : Yet have no hopes at all.
CON. : None.
HEART. : Nay, the resolution may be discreet enough : perhaps you have found out some new philosophy ; that love, like virtue, is its own reward : so you and your mistress will be as well content at a distance, as others that have less learning are in coming together.
CON. : No ; but if she should prove kind at last, my dear Heartfree——
[*Embracing him.*
HEART. : Nay, pr'ythee, don't take me for your mistress ; for lovers are very troublesome.
CON. : Well, who knows what time may do ?
HEART. : And just now he was sure that time could do nothing.
CON. : Yet not one kind glance in two years is somewhat strange.
HEART. : Not strange at all ; she don't like you, that's all the business.
CON. : Pr'ythee, don't distract me.
HEART. : Nay, you are a good handsome, young fellow, she might use you better. Come, will you go see her ? perhaps she may have changed her mind ; there's some hopes, as long as she's a woman.
CON. : Oh ! 'tis in vain to visit her : sometimes, to get a sight of her, I visit that beast her husband ; but she certainly finds some pretence to quit the room as soon as I enter.
HEART. : It's much she don't tell him you have made love to her, too ; for that's another good-natured thing usual amongst women, in which they have several ends. Sometimes 'tis to recommend their virtue, that they may be kind with the greater security. Sometimes 'tis to make their husbands fight in hopes they may be killed, when their affairs require it should be so : but most commonly, 'tis to engage two men in a quarrel, that they may have the credit of being fought for ; and if the lover's killed in the business, they cry, " Poor fellow, he had ill-luck ; " and so they go to cards.
CON. : Thy injuries to women are not to be forgiven. Look to't, if ever you fall into their hands——
HEART. : They can't use me worse than they do you, that speak well of them. Oho ! here comes the knight !

Enter SIR JOHN BRUTE.

Your humble servant, Sir John.
SIR J. : Servant, sir.
HEART. : How does all your family ?
SIR J. : Plague o' my family !
CON. : How does your lady ? I haven't seen her abroad a good while.
SIR J. : Do ! I don't know how she does, not I ; she was well enough yesterday ; I haven't been at home to-night.
CON. : What, were you out of town ?
SIR J. : Out of town ! No ; I was drinking.
CON. : You are a true Englishman ; don't know your own happiness. If I were married to such a woman, I would not be from her a night, for all the wine in France.
SIR J. : Not from her ! Oons ! What a time should a man have of that !
HEART. : Why, there's no division, I hope ?

Sir. J. : No ; but there's a conjunction, and that's worse : a pox of the parson ! Why the plague don't you two marry ? I fancy I look like the devil to you.

Heart. : Why, you don't think you have horns, do you ?

Sir J. : No ; I believe my wife's religion will keep her honest.

Heart. : And what will make her keep her religion ?

Sir J. : Persecution ; and, therefore, she shall have it.

Heart. : Have a care, knight, women are tender things.

Sir J. : And yet, methinks, 'tis a hard matter to break their hearts.

Con. : Fie, fie ! you have one of the best wives in the world, and yet you seem the most uneasy husband.

Sir J. : Best wives ! the woman's well enough ; she has no vice that I know of ; but she's a wife : and d——n a wife ! if I were married to a hogshead of claret, matrimony would make me hate it.

Heart. : Why did you marry, then ? you were old enough to know your own mind.

Sir J. : Why did I marry ! What, you would have me intrigue, I suppose, and so have hedged myself into forty quarrels with her relations ; besides buying my pardon ; but more than all that, you must know I was afraid of being d——d in those days : for I kept sneaking, cowardly company, fellows that went to church, said grace to their meat, and had not the least tincture of quality about them.

Heart. : But I think you have got into a better gang now.

Sir J. : Zoons ! sir, my Lord Rake and I are hand and glove : I believe we may get our bones broken together to-night. Have you a mind to share a frolic ?

Con. : Not I, truly ; my talent lies in softer exercises.

Sir J. : What, a down bed and a strumpet ? A pox of venery, I say. Will you come and drink with me this afternoon ?

Con. : I can't drink to-day ; but we'll come and sit an hour with you if you will.

Sir J. : Pooh ! pox ! sit an hour ! Why can't you drink ?

Con. : Because I'm to see my mistress.

Sir J. : Who's that ?

Con. : Why, do you use to tell ?

Sir J. : Yes.

Con. : So won't I.

Sir J. : Why ?

Con. : Because it is a secret.

Sir J. : Would my wife knew it ! 'twould be no secret long.

Con. : Why, do you think she can't keep a secret ?

Sir J. : No more than she could keep Lent.

Heart. : Pr'ythee, tell it her, to try, Constant.

Sir J. : No, pr'ythee, don't, that I mayn't be plagued with it.

Con. : I'll hold you a guinea you don't make her tell it you.

Sir J. : I'll hold you a guinea I do.

Con. : Which way ?

Sir J. : Why, I'll beg her not to tell it me.

Heart. : Nay, if anything does it, that will.

Con. : But do you think, sir——

Sir J. : Oons ! sir, I think a woman and a secret are the two impertinentest themes in the universe ; therefore, pray, let's hear no more of my wife nor your mistress. D——n them both, with all my heart, and everything else that daggles a petticoat, except four generous whores who are drunk with my Lord Rake and I ten times in a fortnight. [*Exit.*

CON. : Here's a dainty fellow for you ! and the veriest coward, too. But his usage of his wife makes me ready to stab the villain.

HEART. : Lovers are short-sighted : all their senses run into that of feeling. This proceeding of his is the only thing on earth can make you fortunate. If anything can prevail with her to accept a gallant, 'tis his usage of her. Pr'ythee, take heart ; I have great hopes for you : and, since I can't bring you quite off her, I'll endeavour to bring you quite on ; for a whining lover is the d——dest companion upon earth.

CON. : My dear friend, flatter me a little more with these hopes ; for whilst they prevail, I have Elysium within me, and could melt with joy.

HEART. : Pray, no melting yet. This afternoon, perhaps we shall make some advance. In the meanwhile, let's go dine at Locket's, and let hope get you a stomach. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—LADY FANCIFUL'S *House.*

Enter LADY FANCIFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

LADY F. : Did you ever see anything so importune, mademoiselle ?

MADEM. : Inteed, matam, to say de trute, he want leetel good breeding.

LADY F. : Good breeding ! He wants to be caned, mademoiselle. An insolent fellow ! And yet, let me expose my weakness, 'tis the only man on earth I could resolve to dispense my favours on, were he but a fine gentleman. Well, did men but know how deep an impression a fine gentleman makes in a lady's heart, they would reduce all their studies to that of good-breeding alone.

Enter a SERVANT.

SERV. : Will your ladyship please to dine yet ?

LADY F. : Yes, let them serve. (*Exit* SERVANT.) Sure, this Heartfree has bewitched me, mademoiselle. I vow, 'tis a thousand pities he is not more polished ; don't you think so ?

MADEM. : Matam, I think it so great pity, that if I was in your ladyship's place, I take him home in my house, I lock him up in my closet, and I never let him go till I teach him everything dat fine laty expect from fine gentleman.

LADY F. : Why, truly, I believe I should soon subdue his brutality ; for, without doubt, he has a strange penchant to grow fond of me, in spite of his aversion to the sex, else he would never have taken so much pains about me. Lord ! how proud would some poor creatures be of such a conquest ! but I, alas ! I don't know how to receive as a favour, what I take to be so infinitely my due. But what shall I do to new mould him, mademoiselle ? for till then, he's my utter aversion.

MADEM. : Matam, you must laugh at him in all de places dat you meet him, and turn into de ridicule all he say, and all he do.

LADY F. : Why, truly, satire has ever been of wondrous use to reform ill-manners. Besides, 'tis my particular talent to ridicule folks. I can be severe, strangely severe, when I will, mademoiselle. Give me the pen and ink, I find myself whimsical : I'll write to him—or, I'll let it alone, and be severe upon him that way. (*Sitting down to write and rising up again.*) Yet, active severity is better than passive. (*Sitting down.*) 'Tis as good to let it alone, too ; for every lash I give him, perhaps, he'll take for a favour. (*Rising.*) Yet, 'tis a thousand pities so much satire should be lost. (*Sitting.*) But if it should have a wrong effect upon him, 'twould distract me. (*Rising.*) Well, I must write, though, after all. (*Sitting.*) Or I'll let it alone, which is the same thing. [*Rising.*

MADEM. : La voilà determinée. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—SIR JOHN BRUTE'S *House.*

SIR JOHN BRUTE, LADY BRUTE, *and* BELINDA *discovered rising from the table.*

SIR J. : Here, take away the things : I expect company. But, first, bring me a pipe ; I'll smoke. [*To a* SERVANT.

LADY B. : Lord ! Sir John, I wonder you won't leave that nasty custom.

SIR J. : Pr'ythee, don't be impertinent.

BEL. (*to* LADY B.) : I wonder who those are he expects this afternoon.

LADY B. : I'd give the world to know. Perhaps 'tis Constant ; he comes here sometimes : if it does prove him, I'm resolved I'll share the visit.

BEL. : We'll send for our work, and sit here.

LADY B. : He'll choke us with his tobacco.

BEL. : Nothing will choke us, when we are doing what we have a mind to. Lovewell !

Enter LOVEWELL.

LOVE. : Madam.

LADY B. : Here, bring my cousin's work and mine hither.

[*Exit* LOVEWELL, *and re-enters with their work.*

SIR J. : Why, pox ! can't you work somewhere else ?

LADY B. : We shall be careful not to disturb you, sir.

BEL. : Your pipe would make you too thoughtful, uncle, if you were left alone ; our prittle prattle will cure your spleen.

SIR J. : Will it so, Mrs. Pert ? Now I believe it will so increase it (*sitting and smoking*) I shall take my own house for a paper-mill.

LADY B (*aside to* BEL.) : Don't let's mind him ; let him say what he will.

SIR J. : A woman's tongue a cure for the spleen ! Oons ! if a man had got the headache, they'd be for applying the same remedy. [*Aside.*

LADY B. : You have done a good deal, Belinda, since yesterday.

BEL. : Yes, I have worked very hard ; how do you like it ?

LADY B. : Oh ! 'tis the prettiest fringe in the world ! Well, cousin, you have the happiest fancy ! pr'ythee, advise me about altering my crimson petticoat.

SIR J. : D——n your petticoat ! here's such a prating, a man can't digest his own thoughts for you.

LADY B. : Don't answer him. (*Aside.*) Well, what do you advise me ?

BEL. : Why, really, I would not alter it at all. Methinks 'tis very pretty as it is.

LADY B. : Ay, that's true ; but you know one grows weary of the prettiest things in the world, when one has had them long.

SIR J. : Yes, I have taught her that.

BEL. : Shall we provoke him a little ? [*Apart to* LADY B.

LADY B. : With all my heart. Belinda, don't you long to be married ?

BEL. : Why, there are some things in it which I could like well enough.

LADY B. : What do you think you should dislike ?

BEL. : My husband : a hundred to one else.

LADY B. : Oh ! you wicked wretch ! sure, you don't speak as you think ?

BEL. : Yes, I do : especially if he smoked tobacco.

[SIR J. *looks earnestly at them.*

LADY B. : Why, that, many times, takes off worse smells.

BEL. : Then he must smell very ill indeed.

LADY B. : So some men will, to keep their wives from coming near them.

BEL. : Then those wives should cuckold them at a distance.

[SIR J. *runs in a fury, throws his pipe at them, and drives them out. As they run off, enter* CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE ; LADY BRUTE *runs against* CONSTANT.

SIR J. : Oons ! get you gone up stairs, you confederating strumpets you, or I'll cuckold you, with a vengeance !

LADY B. : Oh, lord ! he'll beat us, he'll beat us ! Dear Mr. Constant, save us ! [*Exit with* BELINDA.

SIR J. : I'll cuckold you, with a pox !

CON. : Heaven ! Sir John, what's the matter ?

SIR J. : Sure, if women had been ready created, the devil, instead of being kicked down into hell, had been married.

HEART. : Why, what new plagues have you found now ?

SIR J. : Why, these two gentlewomen did but hear me say I expected you here this afternoon ; upon which they presently resolved to take up the room on purpose to plague me and my friends.

CON. : Was that all ? Why, we should have been glad of their company.

SIR J. : Then I should have been weary of your's ; for I can't relish both together. They found fault with my smoking tobacco, too, and said men stunk ; but I had a good mind to say something.

CON. : Oh ! nothing against the ladies, I hope ?

SIR J. : The ladies ! Come, will you sit down ? Give us some wine, fellow. You won't smoke ?

CON. : No, nor drink neither, at this time ; I must ask your pardon.

SIR J. : What, this mistress of your's runs in your head ? I'll warrant, it's some such squeamish minx as my wife, that's grown so dainty of late, she finds fault even with a dirty shirt.

HEART. : That a woman may do, and not be very dainty neither.

SIR J. : Come, you shall take one glass, though I send for a box of lozenges, to sweeten your mouth after it.

CON. : Nay, if one glass will satisfy you, I'll drink it, without putting you to that expense.

SIR J. : Why, that's honest. So, here's to you, gentlemen. A wife's the devil. To your both being married. [*They drink.*

HEART. : Oh ! your most humble servant, sir.

SIR J. : Well, how do you like my wine ?

CON. : 'Tis very good, indeed.

HEART. : 'Tis admirable.

SIR J. : Then take t'other glass.

CON. : No, pray, excuse us now : we'll come another time, and then we won't spare it.

SIR J. : This one glass, and no more. Come, it shall be your mistress's health ; and that's a great compliment from me, I assure you.

CON. : And 'tis a very obliging one to me ; so give us the glasses.

SIR J. : So, let her live—— [*Coughs in the glass.*

HEART. : And be kind.

CON. : What's the matter ? Does it go the wrong way ?

SIR J. : If I had love enough to be jealous, I should take this for an ill omen ; for I never drunk my wife's health in my life, but I puked in my glass.

CON. : Oh ! she's too virtuous to make any reasonable man jealous.

SIR J. : Pox of her virtue. If I could catch her adulterating, I might be divorced from her by law.

HEART. : And so pay her a yearly pension, to be a distinguished cuckold.

Enter a SERVANT.

SERV. : Sir, there's my Lord Rake, Colonel Bully, and some other gentlemen at the Blue Posts, desire your company.

SIR J. : Gadso ! we are to consult about playing the devil to-night.

HEART. : Well, we won't hinder business.

SIR J. : Methinks, I don't know how to leave you two ; but, for once, I must make bold. Or, look you ! may be, the conference mayn't last long. So, if you'll wait here half-an-hour, or an hour ; if I don't come then, why, then, I won't come at all.

HEART. (*apart to* CON.) : A good modest proposition, truly !

CON. (*apart to* HEART.) : But let's accept on't, however. Who knows what may happen ?

HEART. : Well, sir, to shew you how fond we are of your company, we'll expect your return as long as we can.

SIR J. : Nay, may be I mayn't stay at all ; but business, you know, must be done : so, your servant. Or, hark you ! if you have a mind to take a frisk with us, I have an interest with my lord ; I can easily introduce you.

CON. : We are much beholden to you ; but, for my part, I'm engaged another way.

SIR J. : What, to your mistress, I'll warrant. Pr'ythee, leave her to her own thoughts, and make one with us to-night.

CON. : Sir, 'tis business that is to employ me.

HEART. : And me ; and business must be done, you know.

SIR J. : Ay, women's business, though the world were consumed for't. [*Exit.*

CON. : Farewell, beast ! and now, my dear friend, would my mistress be but as complaisant as some men's wives, who think it a piece of good-breeding to receive the visits of their husband's friends in his absence——

HEART. : Why, for your sake, I could forgive her. But what way shall we invent to see her ?

CON. : Oh ! never hope it : invention will prove as vain as wishes.

Enter LADY BRUTE *and* BELINDA.

HEART. : What do you think now, friend ? [*Apart to* CON.

CON. : I think I shall swoon. [*Apart to* HEART.

HEART. : I'll speak first, then, while you fetch breath. [*Apart to* CON.

LADY B. : We think ourselves obliged, gentlemen, to come and return your thanks for your knight-errantry. We were just upon being devoured by the fiery dragon.

BEL. : Did not his fumes almost knock you down, gentlemen ?

HEART. : Truly, ladies, we did undergo some hardships ; and should have done more, if some greater heroes than ourselves hard by had not diverted him.

CON. : Though I am glad of the service you are pleased to say we have done you, yet I'm sorry we could do it in no other way, than by making ourselves privy to what you would, perhaps, have kept a secret.

LADY B. : For Sir John's part, I suppose he designed it no secret, since he made so much noise. And for myself, truly, I am not much concerned, since 'tis fallen only into this gentleman's hand and your's, who, I have many reasons to believe, will neither interpret nor report anything to my disadvantage.

CON. : Your good opinion, madam, was what I feared I never could have merited.

LADY B. : Your fears were vain, then, sir, for I'm just to everybody.

HEART. : Pr'ythee, Constant, what is it you do to get the ladies' good opinions ? for I'm a novice at it.

BEL. : Sir, will you give me leave to instruct you ?

HEART. : Yes, that I will, with all my soul, madam.

BEL. : Why, then, you must never be a sloven ; never be out of humour ; never smoke tobacco ; nor drink but when you are dry.

HEART. : That's hard.

CON. : Nay, if you take his bottle from him, you break his heart, madam.

BEL. : Why, is it possible the gentleman can love drinking ?

HEART. : Only by way of antidote.

BEL. : Against what, pray ?

HEART. : Against love, madam.

LADY B. : Are you afraid of being in love, sir ?

HEART. : I should, if there were any danger of it.

LADY B. : Pray, why so ?

HEART. : Because I always had an aversion to being used like a dog.

BEL. : Why, truly, men in love are seldom used better.

LADY B. : But were you never in love, sir ?

HEART. : No, I thank heaven, madam.

BEL. : Pray, where got you your learning, then ?

HEART. : From other people's experience.

BEL. : That's being a spunger, sir, which is scarce honest ; if you'd buy some experience with your own money, as 'twould be fairlier got, so 'twould stick longer by you.

Enter a FOOTMAN.

FOOT. : Madam, here's my Lady Fanciful to wait upon your ladyship. [*Exit.*

LADY B. : Shield me, kind heaven ! What an inundation of impertinence is here coming upon us !

Enter LADY FANCIFUL, *who runs first to* LADY BRUTE, *then to* BELINDA, *kissing them.*

LADY F. : My dear Lady Brute, and sweet Belinda, methinks 'tis an age since I saw you.

LADY B. : Yet 'tis but three days ; sure, you have passed your time very ill, it seems so long to you !

LADY F. : Why, really, to confess the truth to you, I am so everlastingly fatigued with the addresses of unfortunate gentlemen that were it not for the extravagancy of the example, I should e'en tear out these wicked eyes with my own fingers to make both myself and mankind easy. What think you on't Mr. Heartfree, for I take you to be my faithful adviser ?

HEART. : Why, truly, madam, I think every project that is for the good of mankind ought to be encouraged.

LADY F. : Then I have your consent, sir ?

HEART. : To do whatever you please, madam.

LADY F. : You had a much more limited complaisance this morning, sir. Would you believe it, ladies ? this gentleman has been so exceeding generous, to tell me of above fifty faults, in less time than it was well possible for me to commit two of them.

CON. : Why, truly, madam, my friend there is apt to be something familiar with the ladies.

LADY F. : He is, indeed, sir ; but he's wondrous charitable with it ; he has had the goodness to design a reformation, e'en down to my fingers' ends. 'Twas thus, I think, sir (*opening her fingers in an awkward manner*) you'd have them stand ? My eyes, too, he did not like. How was it you would have directed them ? thus, I think. (*Staring at him.*) Then, there was something amiss in my gait, too ; I don't know well how 'twas, but, as I take it, he would have me walk like him. Prav, sir, do me the favour to take a turn or two about the room, that the company may see you. He's sullen, ladies, and won't. But, to

make short, and give you as true an idea as I can of the matter, I think 'twas much about this figure in general, he would have moulded me to—but I was an obstinate woman, and could not resolve to make myself mistress of his heart, by growing as awkward as his fancy.

[*She walks awkwardly about, staring and looking ungainly ; then changes on a sudden to the extremity of her usual affectation.*

HEART. : Just thus women do, when they think we are in love with them, or when they are so with us.

[CONSTANT *and* LADY B. *talk together apart.*

LADY F. : 'Twould, however, be less vanity for me to conclude the former, than you the latter, sir.

HEART. : Madam, all I shall presume to conclude is, that if I were in love, you'd find the means to make me soon weary on't.

LADY F. : Not by over fondness, upon my word, sir. But, pr'ythee, let's stop here ; for you are so much governed by instinct, I know you'll grow brutish at last.

BEL. (*aside*) : Now am I sure she's fond of him. I'll try to make her jealous. Well, for my part, I should be glad to find somebody would be so free with me, that I might know my faults, and mend them.

LADY F. : Then, pray, let me recommend this gentleman to you ; I have known him some time, and will be surety for him, that upon a very limited encouragement on your side, you shall find an extended impudence on his.

HEART. : I thank you, madam, for your recommendation ; but, hating idleness, I'm unwilling to enter into a place where, I believe, there would be nothing to do. I was fond of serving your ladyship, because I knew you'd find me constant employment.

LADY F. : I told you he'd be rude, Belinda.

BEL. : Oh ! a little bluntness is a sign of honesty, which makes me always ready to pardon it. So, sir, if you have no other objection to my service, but the fear of being idle in it, you may venture to list yourself : I shall find you work, I warrant you.

HEART. : Upon those terms I engage, madam ; and thus, with your leave, I take for earnest. [*Offers to kiss her hand.*

BEL. : Hold there, sir ! I'm none of your earnest-givers. But, if I'm well served, I give good wages, and pay punctually.

[HEARTFREE *and* BELINDA *seem to continue talking familiarly together.*

LADY F. (*aside*) : I don't like this jesting between them. Methinks the fool begins to look as if he were in earnest ; but then he must be a fool indeed. Lard ! what a difference there is between me and her ! (*Looking at* BELINDA *scornfully.*) How I should despise such a thing, if I were a man ! What a nose she has ! what a chin ! what a neck ! Then her eyes—and the worst kissing lips in the universe ! No, no, he can never like her, that's positive ; yet I can't suffer them together any longer. Mr. Heartfree, do you know that you and I must have no quarrel, for all this ? I can't forbear being a little severe, now and then ; but women, you know, may be allowed anything.

HEART. : Up to a certain age, madam.

LADY F. : Which I'm not yet past, I hope.

HEART. (*aside*) : Nor ever will, I dare swear.

LADY F. (*to* LADY B.) : Come, madam, will your ladyship be witness to our reconciliation ?

LADY B. : You are agreed, then, at last ?

HEART. (*slightingly*) : We forgive.

LADY F. (*aside*) : That was a cold, ill-natured reply.

LADY B. : Then there are no challenges sent between you ?

HEART. : Not from me, I promise. (*Aside to* CONSTANT.) But that's more than I'll do for her ; for I know she can as well be hanged as forbear writing to me.

CON. : That I believe. But I think we had best be going, lest she should suspect something, and be malicious.

HEART. : With all my heart.

CON. : Ladies, we are your humble servants. I see Sir John is quite engaged, 'twould be in vain to expect him. Come, Heartfree. [*Exit.*

HEART. : Ladies, your servant. (*To* BEL.) I hope, madam, you won't forget our bargain ; I'm to say what I please to you. [*Exit.*

BEL. : Liberty of speech entire, sir.

LADY F. (*aside*) : Very pretty, truly ! But how the blockhead went out languishing at her ; and not a look towards me ! Well, people may talk, but miracles are not ceased. For, 'tis more than natural, such a rude fellow as he is, and such a little impertinent as she should be capable of making a woman of my sphere uneasy. But I can bear her sight no longer, methinks she's grown ten times uglier than Cornet. I must home and study revenge. (*To* LADY B.) Madam, your humble servant ; I must take my leave.

LADY B. : What, going already, madam ?

LADY F. : I must beg you'll excuse me this once ; for, really, I have eighteen visits to return this afternoon ; so, you see, I'm importuned by the women as well as the men. (*Going.*) Nay, you shan't go one step out of the room.

LADY B. : Indeed, I'll wait upon you down.

LADY F. : No, sweet Lady Brute, you know I swoon at ceremony.

LADY B. : Pray, give me leave.

LADY F. : You know I won't.

LADY B. : Indeed I must.

LADY F. : Indeed you shan't.

LADY B. : Indeed I will.

LADY F. : Indeed you shan't.

LADY B. : Indeed I will.

LADY F. : Indeed you shan't. Indeed, indeed, indeed you shan't.

[*Exit running ; they follow.*

Re-enter LADY BRUTE.

LADY B. : This impertinent woman has put me out of humour for a fortnight. What an agreeable moment has her foolish visit interrupted ! Lord ! what a pleasure there is in doing what we should not do !

Enter CONSTANT.

Ah ! here again !

CON. : Though the renewing my visit may seem a little irregular, I hope, I shall obtain your pardon for it, madam, when you know I only left the room lest the lady who was here should have been as malicious in her remarks as she is foolish in her conduct.

LADY B. : He who has discretion enough to be tender of a woman's reputation, carries a virtue about him that may atone for a great many faults.

CON. : If it has a title to atone for any, its pretensions must needs be strongest, where the crime is love. But I hope it cannot be reckoned an offence to love, where it is a duty to adore.

LADY B. : 'Tis an offence, a great one, where it would rob a woman of all she ought to be adored for—her virtue.

CON. : Virtue ! that phantom of honour, which men in every age have so condemned, they have thrown it amongst the women to scramble for.

LADY B. : If it be a thing of so very little value, why do you so earnestly recommend it to your wives and daughters ?

CON. : We recommend it to our wives, madam, because we would keep them to ourselves ; and to our daughters because we would dispose of them to others.

LADY B. : 'Tis, then, of some importance, it seems, since you can't dispose of them without it.

CON. : I beg you will believe I did but rally, madam. I know you judge too well of right and wrong to be deceived by arguments like those. And I hope you will have so favourable an opinion of my understanding, too, to believe the thing called virtue has worth enough with me to pass for an eternal obligation wherever 'tis sacrificed.

LADY B. : It is, I think, so great a one, as nothing can repay.

CON. : Yes, the making the man you love your everlasting debtor.

LADY B. : When debtors once have borrowed all we have to lend, they are very apt to grow shy of their creditors' company.

CON. : That, madam, is only when they are forced to borrow of usurers, and not of a generous friend. Let us choose our creditors and we are seldom so ungrateful as to shun them.

LADY B. : What think you of Sir John, sir ? I was his free choice.

CON. : I think he's married, madam.

LADY B. : Does marriage, then, exclude men from your rule of constancy ?

CON. : It does. Constancy's a brave, free, haughty, generous agent, that cannot buckle to the chains of wedlock. (*Following her.*) But, madam——

LADY B. : But, sir, 'tis my turn to be discreet now, and not suffer too long a visit.

CON. (*catching her hand*) : By heaven, you shall not stir till you give me hopes that I shall see you again at some more convenient time and place.

LADY B. : I give you just hopes enough (*breaking from him*) to get loose from you ; and that's all I can afford you at this time. [*Exit running.*

CON. : Now, by all that's great and good, she's a charming woman ! In what ecstacy of joy she has left me ! for she gave me hope. Did she not say she gave me hope ? Hope ! Ay, what hope ? Enough to make me let her go ! Why, that's enough in conscience. Or, no matter how 'twas spoke, hope was the word, it came from her, and it was said to me.

Enter HEARTFREE.

Ah ! Heartfree, thou hast done me noble service in prattling to the young gentlewoman without there. Come to my arms, thou venerable bawd, and let me squeeze thee (*embracing him eagerly*) as a new pair of stays does a fat country girl when she's carried to court to stand for a maid of honour.

HEART. : Why, what the devil's all this rapture for ?

CON. : Rapture ! There's ground for rapture, man ! There's hopes, my Heartfree—hopes, my friend.

HEART. : Hopes ! of what ?

CON. : Why, hopes that my lady and I together (for 'tis more than one body's work), should make Sir John a cuckold.

HEART. : Prythee, what did she say to thee ?

CON. : Say ! What did she not say ! She said that—says she—she said—Zoons ! I don't know what she said ; but she looked as if she said everything I'd have her : and so, if thou'lt go to the tavern, I'll treat thee with anything that

gold can buy ; I'll give all my silver among the drawers, make a bonfire before the doors ; swear that the Pope's turned protestant, and that all the politicians in England are of one mind. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Tavern.*

LORD RAKE, SIR JOHN BRUTE, *etc., discovered at a table, drinking.*

ALL. : Huzza !

LORD R. : Come, boys, charge again : so—confusion to all order. Here's liberty of conscience.

ALL. : Huzza !

LORD R. : Come, sing the song I made this morning, to this purpose.

SIR J. : 'Tis wicked, I hope.

LORD R. : Don't I tell you that I made it ?

SIR J. : My lord, I beg your pardon for doubting your taste. Come, begin.

SONG.—COLONEL BULLY.

We're gayly yet, we're gayly yet,
And we're not very fow, but we're gayly yet ;
Then sit ye awhile, and tipple a bit,
For we's not very fow, but we're gayly yet,
And we're gayly yet, etc.

There were three lads, and they were clad,
There were three lasses, and them they had.
Three trees in the orchard are newly sprung,
And we's a git geer enough, we're but young.
And we're gayly yet, etc.

Then up went Ailey, Ailey, up went Ailey now ;
Then up with Ailey, quo' Crumma, we's get a roaring fow.
And one was kiss'd in the barn, another was kiss'd in the green,
And t'other behind the pease-stack, till the mow flew up to her eyn.
Then up went Ailey, Ailey, etc.

Now, fie ! John Thompson, run,
Gin ever you run in your life,
De'il get ye ! but, hie, my dear Jack,
There's a mon got to bed with your wife.
Then up went Ailey, etc.

Then away John Thompson run,
And, egad ! he run with speed,
But before he had run his length
The false loon had done the deed.
Then up went Ailey, etc.

LORD R. : Well, how do you like it, gentlemen ?

ALL : Oh ! admirable !

SIR J. : I would not give a fig for a song that is not full of sin and impudence.

LORD R. : Then my muse is to your taste. But drink away ; the night steals upon us ; we shall want time to be lewd in. Hey ! sally out, sirrah, and see what's doing in the camp ; we'll beat up the quarters presently.

WAIT. : I'll bring your lordship an exact account. [*Exit.*

LORD R. : Courage, knight ! victory attends you !

SIR J. : And laurels shall crown me. Drink away, and be d——d !
LORD R. : Again, boys ! t'other glass, and no morality.
SIR J. (*drunk*) : Ay, no morality—and d——n the watch ! And let the constable be married.
ALL : Huzza !

Enter WAITER.

LORD R. : How are the streets inhabited, sirrah ?
WAIT. : My lord, it's Sunday night, they are full of drunken citizens. [*Exit.*
LORD R. : Along, then, boys, we shall have a feast.
COL. : Along, noble knight !
SIR J. : Ay, along, Bully ! and he that says Sir John Brute is not as drunk, and as religious as the drunkenest citizen of them all, is a liar, and the son of a whore.
COL. : Why, that was bravely spoken, and like a free-born Englishman.
SIR J. : What's that to you, sir, whether I am an Englishman or a Frenchman ?
COL. : Zoons ! you are not angry, sir ?
SIR J. : Zoons ! I am angry, sir ; for, if I am a free-born Englishman, what have you to do, even to talk of my privileges ?
LORD R. : Why, pr'ythee, knight, don't quarrel here ; leave private animosities to be decided by daylight ; let the night be employed against the public enemy.
SIR J. : My lord, I respect you, because you are a man of quality. But I'll make that fellow know I'm within a hair's-breadth as absolute by my privileges, as the king of France is by his prerogative. He, by his prerogative, takes money where it is not his due ; I, by my privilege, refuse paying it where I owe it. Liberty and property, and old England ! Huzza !
ALL : Huzza ! [*Exit* SIR JOHN, *reeling, the rest following.*

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*Covent Garden.*

Enter LORD RAKE *and* COLONEL BULLY, *with their swords drawn.*

LORD R. : Is the dog dead ?
COL. : No, d——n him ! I heard him wheeze.
LORD R. : How the witch his wife howled !
COL. : Ay, she'll alarm the watch presently.
LORD R. : Appear, knight, then ; come, you have a good cause to fight for ; there's a man murdered.

Enter SIR JOHN BRUTE.

SIR J. : Is there ? then let his ghost be satisfied ; for I'll sacrifice a constable to it presently, and burn his body upon his wooden chair.

Enter a TAILOR, *with a bundle under his arm.*

COL. : How now ! What have we got here ? a thief ?
TAI. : No, an't please you, I'm no thief.
LORD R. : That we'll see presently. Here, let the general examine him.
SIR J. : Ay, ay ; let me examine him, and I'll lay a hundred pounds I find him guilty, in spite of his teeth ; for he looks like a sneaking rascal. Come, sirrah, without equivocation, or mental reservation, tell me of what opinion you are, and what calling ; for by them I shall guess at your morals.

TAI. : An't please you, I'm a dissenting journeyman woman's tailor.

SIR J. : Then, sirrah, you love lying by your religion, and theft by your trade : and so, that your punishments may be suitable to your crimes, I'll have you first gagged, and then hanged.

TAI. : Pray, good worthy gentlemen, don't abuse me : indeed, I am an honest man, and a good workman, though I say it that should not say it.

SIR J. : No words, sirrah, but attend your fate.

LORD R. : Let me see what's in that bundle.

TAI. : An't please you, it's my lady's morning dress and hat.

SIR J. : What lady, you reptile, you ?

TAI : My Lady Brute, an't please your honour.

SIR J. : My Lady Brute ! my wife ! the robe of my wife ! With reverence let me approach it. The dear angel is always taking care of me in danger, and has sent me this suit of armour to protect me in this day of battle : on they go.

ALL : Oh, brave knight !

LORD R. : Live, Don Quixote the second !

SIR J. : Sancho, my 'squire, help me on with my armour.

TAI. : Oh ! dear gentleman ! I shall be quite undone if you take the sack.

SIR J. : Retire, sirrah ! and, since you carry off your skin, go home, and be happy. (*Exit* TAILOR. *They dress* SIR J.) So ! how do you like my shapes now ?

LORD R. : To a miracle ! he looks like a queen of the Amazons. But to your arms, gentlemen ! the enemy's upon their march ; here's the watch.

SIR J. : Oons ! if it were Alexander the Great, at the head of his army, I would drive him into a horsepond.

ALL : Huzza ! Oh, brave knight !

Enter WATCHMEN.

SIR J. : See ! here he comes, with all his Greeks about him : follow me, boys.

1 WATCH. : Heyday ! Who have we got here ? stand !

SIR J. : Mayhap not.

1 WATCH. : What are you all doing here in the streets at this time of night ? And who are you, madam, that seems to be at the head of this noble crew ?

SIR J. : Sirrah, I am Bonduca, queen of the Welshmen ; and, with a leek as long as my pedigree, I will destroy your Roman legions in an instant. Britons, strike home !

[*Snatches a* WATCHMAN'S *staff, strikes at the* WATCH, *drives them off, and returns in custody.*

1 WATCH. : So ! we have got the queen, however. We'll make her pay well for her ransom. Come, madam, will your majesty please to walk before the constable ?

SIR J. : The constable's a rascal, and you are a son of a whore !

1 WATCH. : A most noble reply, truly ! If this be her royal style, I'll warrant her maids of honour prattle prettily : but we'll teach you some of our court dialect before we part with you, princess. Away with her to the round-house.

SIR J. : Hands off, you ruffians ! My honour's dearer to me than my life ; I hope you won't be so uncivil.

1 WATCH : Away with her.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A chamber.*

Enter HEARTFREE.

HEART. : What the plague ails me ? Love ! No, I thank you for that ; my heart's rock still. Yet, 'tis Belinda that disturbs me, that's positive. Well, what of all that ? Must I love her for being troublesome ? At that rate, I might love all

the women I meet, egad ! But hold ! though I don't love her for disturbing me, yet she may disturb me, because I love her. Ay, that may be, faith. I have dreamt of her, that's certain. Well, so I have of my mother ; therefore, what's that to the purpose ? Ay, but Belinda runs in my mind waking—and so does many a d——d thing, that I don't care a farthing for. Methinks, though, I would fain be talking to her, and yet I have no business. Well, am I the first man that has had a mind to do an impertinent thing ?

Enter CONSTANT.

CON. : How now, Heartfree ! What makes you up and dressed so soon ? I thought none but lovers quarrelled with their beds ; I expected to have found you snoring, as I used to do.

HEART. : Why, faith ! friend, 'tis the care I have of your affairs that makes me so thoughtful ; I have been studying all night how to bring your matter about with Belinda.

CON. : With Belinda ?

HEART. : With my lady, I mean : and, faith ! I have mighty hopes on't. Sure, you must be very well satisfied with her behaviour to you yesterday ?

CON. : So well, that nothing but a lover's fears can make me doubt of success. But what can this sudden change proceed from ?

HEART. : Why, you saw her husband beat her, did you not ?

CON. : That's true : a husband is scarce to be borne upon any terms, much less when he fights with his wife. Methinks she should e'en have cuckolded him upon the spot, to shew, that after the battle she was master of the field.

HEART. : A council of war of women would infallibly have advised her to it. But, I confess, so agreeable a woman as Belinda deserves better usage.

CON. : Belinda again !

HEART. : My lady, I mean. What a plague makes me blunder so to-day ? (*Aside.*) A plague of this treacherous tongue.

CON. : Pr'ythee, look upon me seriously, Heartfree. Now answer me directly : is it my lady, or Belinda, employs your careful thoughts thus ?

HEART. : My lady, or Belinda !

CON. : In love, by this light ! in love !

HEART. : In love !

CON. : Nay, never deny it ; for thou'lt do it so awkwardly, 'twill but make the jest sit heavier about thee. My dear friend, I give you much joy.

HEART. : Why, pr'ythee, you won't persuade me to it, will you ?

CON. : That she's mistress of your tongue, that's plain ; and I know you are so honest a fellow, your tongue and heart always go together. But how—but how the devil—psha ! Ha, ha, ha !

HEART. : Heyday ! Why, sure, you don't believe it in earnest ?

CON. : Yes, I do, because I see you deny it in jest.

HEART. : Nay, but, look you ! Ned—a—deny in jest—a—gadzooks ! you know, I say—a—when a man denies a thing in jest—a——

CON. : Ha, ha, ha !

HEART. : Nay, then we shall have it : what, because a man stumbles at a word ? Did you never make a blunder ?

CON. : Yes, for I am in love ; I own it.

HEART. : Then so am I :—now laugh till thy soul's glutted with mirth. But, dear Constant, don't tell the town on't.

CON. : Nay, then, 'twere almost a pity to laugh at thee, after so honest a confession.

Enter a FOOTMAN.

FOOT. : Sir, there's a porter without with a letter ; he desires to give it into your own hands.

CON. : Call him in.

Enter PORTER.

What, Joe, is it thee ?

PORT. : An't please you, sir, I was ordered to deliver this into your hands, by two well-shaped ladies, at the New Exchange. I was at your honour's lodgings, and your servants sent me hither.

CON. : 'Tis well : are you to carry any answer ?

PORT. : No, my noble master. They gave me my orders, and whip, they are gone.

CON. : Very well : there. [*Gives him money.*

PORT. : Heaven bless your honour ! [*Exit.*

CON. : Now let's see what honest, trusty Joe has brought us. (*Reads.*) " If you and your playfellow can spare time from your business and devotions, don't fail to be at Spring Garden about eight in the evening. You'll find nothing there but women, so you need bring no other arms than what you usually carry about you." So, playfellow, here's something to stay your stomach till your mistress's dish is ready for you.

HEART. : Some of our old battered acquaintance. I won't go, not I.

CON. : Nay, that you can't avoid : there's honour in the case ; 'tis a challenge, and I want a second.

HEART. : I doubt I shall be but a very useless one to you ; for I'm so disheartened by this wound Belinda has given me, I do not think I shall have courage enough to draw my sword.

CON. : Oh ! if that be all, come along ; I'll warrant you'll find sword enough for such enemies as we have to deal withal. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Hall in the* JUSTICE'S *house.*

Enter CONSTABLE *and* WATCHMEN *with* SIR JOHN BRUTE.

CONST. : Come, forsooth, come along, if you please. I once, in compassion, thought to have seen you safe home this morning ; but you have been so rampant and abusive all night, I shall see what the justice of peace will say to you.

SIR J. : And you shall see what I'll say to the justice of peace, sirrah.

[WATCHMAN *knocks at the door.*

Enter SERVANT.

CONST. : Is Mr. Justice at home ?

SERV. : Yes.

CONST. : Pray acquaint his worship we have got an unruly woman here, and desire to know what he'll please to have done with her.

SERV. : I'll acquaint my master. [*Exit.*

SIR J. : Hark you ! constable, what cuckoldy justice is this ?

CONST. : One that knows how to deal with such romps as you are, I'll warrant you.

Enter JUSTICE.

JUST. : Well, Mr. Constable, what is the matter here ?

CONST. : An't please your worship, this here comical sort of a gentlewoman has committed great outrages to-night. She has been frolicking with my Lord Rake and his gang ; they attacked the watch, and I hear there has been a man killed. I believe 'tis they have done it.

IR J. : Sir, there may have been murder, for aught I know ; and 'tis a great mercy there has not been a rape, too ; that fellow would have ravished me.

WATCH. : Ravish, ravish ! Oh, lud ! oh, lud ! oh, lud ! Do I look like a ravisher ?

UST. : Why, truly, she does seem a little masculine about the mouth.

WATCH. : Yes, and about the hands, too, an't please your worship. I did but offer, in mere civility, to help her up the steps into our apartment, and with her gripen fists—— [SIR J. *knocks him down.*

IR J. : I felled him to the ground, like an ox.

UST. : Out upon this boisterous woman ! out upon her !

IR J. : Mr. Justice, he would have been uncivil ; it was in defence of my honour, and I demand satisfaction.

WATCH. : I hope your worship will satisfy her honour in Bridewell ! that fist of her's will make an admirable hemp-beater.

IR J. : I hope you will protect me against that libidinous rascal. I am a woman of quality, and virtue, too, for all I am in an undress this morning.

UST. : Why, she really has the air of a sort of woman a little somethingish out of the common. Madam, if you expect I should be favourable to you, I desire I may know who you are.

IR J. : Sir, I am anybody, at your service.

UST. : I desire to know your name.

IR J. : Sir, my name's Mary.

UST. : Ay, but your surname, madam.

IR J. : Sir, my surname's the very same with my husband's.

UST. : A strange woman this ! Who is your husband, pray ?

IR J : Sir John——

UST. : Sir John who ?

IR J. : Sir John Brute.

UST. : Is it possible, madam, you can be my Lady Brute ?

IR J. : That happy woman, sir, am I ; only a little in my merriment to-night.

UST. : I am concerned for Sir John.

IR J. : Truly, so am I.

UST. : I have heard he is an honest gentleman.

IR J. : As ever drank.

UST. : Good lack ! Indeed, lady, I'm sorry he has such a wife.

IR J. : I am sorry he has any wife at all.

UST. : And so, perhaps, may he. I doubt you have not given him a very good taste of matrimony.

IR J. : Taste, sir ! I have scorned to stint him to a taste ; I have given him a full meal of it.

UST. : Indeed, I believe so. But, pray, fair lady, may he have given you any occasion for this extraordinary conduct ? does he not use you well ?

IR J. : A little upon the rough sometimes.

UST. : Ay, any man may be out of humour now and then.

IR J. : Sir, I love peace and quiet ; and when a woman don't find that at home, she's apt, sometimes, to comfort herself with a few innocent diversions abroad.

UST. : A strange woman this ! Does he spend a reasonable portion of his time at home, to the comfort of his wife and children ?

IR J. : He never gave his wife cause to repine at his being abroad in his life.

UST. : Pray, madam, how may he be in the grand matrimonial point. Is he true to your bed ?

IR J. : Sir !

JUST. : Is he true to your bed ?

SIR J. : Chaste ! Oons ! this fellow asks so many impertinent questions ! Egad ! I believe it is the justice's wife in the justice's clothes. [*Aside.*

JUST. : 'Tis a great pity she should have been thus disposed of. Pray, madam (and then I have done), what may be your ladyship's common method of life ? if I may presume so far.

SIR J. : Why, sir, much that of a woman of quality.

JUST. : Pray, how may you generally pass your time, madam ? Your morning, for example.

SIR J. : Sir, like a woman of quality, I wake about two o'clock in the afternoon ; I stretch, and make a sign for my chocolate ; when I have drunk three cups, I slide down again upon my back, with my arms over my head, while my two maids put on my stockings ; then, hanging upon their shoulders, I am trailed to my great chair, where I sit and yawn for my breakfast ; if it don't come presently, I lie down upon my couch to say my prayers, while my maid reads me the play-bills.

JUST. : Very well, madam !

SIR J. : When the tea is brought in, I drink twelve regular dishes, with eight slices of bread and butter ; and, half-an-hour after, I send to the cook, to know, if the dinner is almost ready.

JUST. : So, madam !

SIR J. : By that time my head is half-dressed, I hear my husband swearing himself into a state of perdition that the meat's all cold upon the table ; to amend which, I come down in an hour more, and have it sent back to the kitchen, to be all dressed over again.

JUST. : Poor man !

SIR J. : When I have dined, and my idle servants are presumptuously set down at their ease to do so too, I call for my coach, to go visit fifty dear friends, of whom I hope I never shall find one at home while I shall live.

JUST. : So ! there's the morning and afternoon pretty well disposed of. Pray, how, madam, do you pass your evenings ?

SIR J. : Like a woman of spirit, sir ; a great spirit. Give me a box and dice—seven's the main ! Oons ! sir, I set you a hundred pounds ! Why, do you think women are married now-a-days to sit at home and mend napkins ? Oh ! the lord help your head !

JUST. : Mercy on us ! Mr. Constable, what will this age come to ?

CONST. : What will it come to, indeed, if such women as these are not set in the stocks !

SIR J. : Mr. Justice !

JUST. : Madam !

SIR J. : Sir, I have a little urgent business calls upon me ; and, therefore, I desire the favour of you to bring matters to a conclusion.

JUST. : Madam, if I were sure that business were not to commit more disorders, I would release you.

SIR J. : None—by my virtue.

JUST. : Then, Mr. Constable, you may discharge her.

SIR J. : Sir, your very humble servant. Will you please to accept of a bottle ?

JUST. : I thank you kindly, madam : but I never drink in a morning. Good b'ye, madam ! good b'ye !

SIR J. : Mr. Justice, will you be so kind and obliging as to grant me one favour ?

JUST. : Ay : what is it ?

SIR J. : That your worhsip would be so very obliging as to let me have the honour of a chaste salute. Won't you ?

JUST. : Good by'e, madam !

SIR J. : Good b'ye, good sir ! (*Exit* JUSTICE). So now, Mr. Constable, shall you and I go pick up a whore together ?

CONST. : No, thank you, madam : my wife's enough to satisfy any reasonable man.

SIR J. (*aside*). He, he, he ! The fool is married, then. Well, you won't go ?

CONST. : Not I, truly !

SIR J. : Then I'll go by myself ; and you and your wife may go to the devil.
[*Exit.*

CONST. (*gazing after him*) : Why, God-a-mercy, lady. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*Spring Garden*

CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE *cross the stage. As they go off, enter* LADY FANCIFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE, *masked, and dogging them.*

CON. : So ! I think we are about the time appointed : let us walk up this way.
[*Exit with* HEARTFREE.

LADY F. : Good ! thus far I have dogged them without being discovered. 'Tis infallibly some intrigue that brings them to Spring Garden. How my poor heart is torn and racked with fear and jealousy ! Let it be anything but that flirt Belinda, and I'll try to bear it. But, if it proves her, all that's woman in me shall be employed to destroy her.
[*Exit after* CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

Re-enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE. LADY FANCIFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE *still following at a distance.*

CON. : I see no females yet, that have anything to say to us. I'm afraid we are bantered.

HEART. : I wish we were, for I'm in no humour to make either them or myself merry.

Enter LADY BRUTE *and* BELINDA, *masked, and poorly dressed.*

CON. : How now ! Who are these ? Not our game, I hope.

HEART. : If they are, we are e'en well enough served, to come a hunting here when we had so much better game in chase elsewhere.

LADY F. (*to* MADEMOISELLE) : So, those are their ladies, without doubt. But I'm afraid that doily stuff is not worn for want of better clothes. They are the very shape and size of Belinda and her aunt.

MADEM. : So dey be, inteed, matam.

LADY F. : We'll slip into this close arbour, where we may hear all they say.
[*Exit with* MADEM.

LADY B. : What, are you afraid of us, gentlemen ?

HEART. : Why, truly, I think we may, if appearances don't lie.

BEL. : Do you always find women what they appear to be, sir ?

HEART. : No, forsooth ! but I seldom find them better than they appear to be.

BEL. : Then the outside's best, you think.

HEART : 'Tis the honestest.

CON. : Have a care, Heartfree ! you are relapsing again.

LADY B. : Why, does the gentleman use to rail at women ?

CON. : He has done formerly.

BEL. : I suppose he had very good call for't. They did not use you so well as you thought you deserved, sir ?

LADY B. : They made themselves merry at your expense, sir ?

BEL. : Laughed when you sighed ?

LADY B. : Slept while you were waking ?
BEL. : Had your porter beat ?
LADY B. : And threw your billet-doux in the fire ?
HEART. : Heyday ! I shall do more than rail, presently.
BEL. : Why, you won't beat us, will you ?
HEART. : I don't know but I may.
CON. : What the devil's coming here ? Sir John, and drunk, i'faith !

Enter SIR JOHN BRUTE.

SIR J. : What, a pox ! here's Constant, Heartfree, and two whores, egad ! Oh ! you covetous rogues ! What have you never a spare punk for your friend ? But I'll share with you. [*Seizes both the women.*
HEART. : Why, what the plague have you been doing, knight ?
SIR J. : Why, I have been beating the watch, and scandalising the women of quality.
HEART. : A very good account, truly !
SIR J. : And what do you think I'll do next ?
CON. : Nay, that no man can guess.
SIR J. : Why, if you'll let me sup with you, I'll treat both your strumpets.
LADY B. (*aside*) : Oh, lord ! we are undone.
HEART. : No, we can't sup together, because we have some affairs elsewhere. But if you'll accept of these two ladies, we'll be so complaisant to you to resign our right in them.
BEL. (*aside*) : Lord ! what shall we do ?
SIR J. : Let me see ; their clothes are such d——d clothes, they won't pawn for the reckoning.
HEART. : Sir John, your servant. Raptures attend you.
CON. : Adieu, ladies ; make much of the gentleman.
LADY B. : Why, sure, you won't leave us in the hands of a drunken fellow, to abuse us ?
SIR J. : Who do you call a drunken fellow, you slut you ! I'm a man of quality : the king has made me a knight.
HEART. : Ay, ay, you are in good hands ; adieu, adieu ! [*Runs off.*
LADY B. : The devil's hands ! let me go, or I'll—for heaven's sake protect us ! [*Breaks from* SIR J. ; *runs to* CONSTANT, *twitching off her mask, and clapping it on again.*
SIR J. : I'll devil you, you jade, you ! I'll demolish your ugly face.

Re-enter HEARTFREE, BELINDA *runs to him, and shews her face.*

HEART. : Hold, thou mighty man ! Lookye ! sir, we did but jest with you. These are ladies of our acquaintance, that we had a mind to frighten a little ; but now you must leave us.
SIR J. : Oons ! I won't leave you, not I.
HEART. : Nay, but you must, though ; and, therefore, make no words on't.
SIR J. : Then you are a couple of d——d uncivil fellows ; and I hope your punks will give you sauce to your mutton. [*Exit.*
LADY B. : Oh ! I shall never come to myself again, I'm so frightened !
CON. : 'Tis a narrow escape, indeed.
BEL. : Women must have frolics, you see, whatever they cost them.
HEART. : This might have proved a dear one, though.
LADY B. : You are the more obliged to us for the risk we run upon your accounts.
CON. : And I hope you'll acknowledge something due to our knight errantry, ladies. This is the second time we have delivered you.

LADY B. : 'Tis true : and since we see fate has destined you for our guardians, 'twill make us the more willing to trust ourselves in your hands. But you must not have the worse opinion of us for our innocent frolic.

HEART. : Ladies, you may command our opinion in everything that is to your advantage.

BEL. : Then sir, I command you to be of opinion, that women are sometimes better than they appear to be. [LADY B. *and* CONSTANT *talk apart.*

HEART. : Madam, you have made a convert of me in everything. I'm grown a fool. I could be fond of a woman.

BEL. : I thank you, sir, in the name of the whole sex.

HEART. : Which sex nothing but yourself could ever have atoned for.

BEL. : Now has my vanity a devilish itch to know in what my merit consists.

HEART. : In your humility, madam, that keeps you ignorant it consists at all.

BEL. : One other compliment, with that serious face, and I hate you for ever after.

HEART. : Some women love to be abused ; is that it you would be at ?

BEL. : No, not that neither ; but I'd have men talk plainly what's fit for women to hear, without putting them to a real or an affected blush.

HEART. : Why, then, in as plain terms as I can find to express myself, I could love you even to matrimony itself—almost, egad !

BEL. : Just as Sir John did her ladyship there——

HEART. : Dear creature ! do but try me.

BEL. : That's the surest way, indeed, to know ; but not the safest.—(*To* LADY *B.*). Madam, are you not for taking a turn in the great walk ? It's almost dark ; nobody will know us.

LADY B. : Really, I find myself something idle, Belinda : besides, I dote upon this little, odd, private corner. But don't let my lazy fancy confine you.

CON. (*aside*) : So, she would be left alone with me ! that's well.

BEL. : Well, we'll take one turn, and come to you again.—(*To* HEARTFREE). Come, sir, shall we go pry into the secrets of the garden ? Who knows what discoveries we may make ?

HEART. : Madam, I am at your service.

CON. (*aside to* HEARTFREE) : Don't make too much haste back ; for, d'ye hear ? —I may be busy.

HEART. : Enough ! [*Exit* BEL. *with* HEARTFREE.

LADY B. : Sure, you think me scandalously free, Mr. Constant ; I'm afraid I shall lose your good opinion of me.

CON. : My good opinion, madam, is like your cruelty—never to be removed.

LADY B. : Indeed I doubt you much. Why, suppose you had a wife, and she should entertain a gallant ?

CON. : If I gave her just cause, how should I justly condemn her ?

LADY B. : Ah ! but you differ widely about just causes.

CON. : But blows can bear no dispute.

LADY B. : Nor ill manners much, truly.

CON. : Then no woman on earth has so just a cause as you have. But, for heaven's sake ! (for now I must be serious), if pity, or if gratitude can move you ;—(*taking her hand*) if constancy and truth have power to tempt you ; if love, if adoration, can affect you, give me at least some hopes, that time may do, what you, perhaps, mean never to perform : 'twill ease my sufferings, though not quench my flame.

LADY B. : Your sufferings eased, your flame would soon abate ; and that I would preserve, not quench it, sir.

CON. : Would you preserve it, nourish it with favours ; for that's the food it naturally requires.

LADY B. : Yet on that natural food 'twould surfeit soon, should I resolve to grant all you would ask.

CON. : And in refusing all, you starve it. Forgive me, therefore (since my hunger rages), if I at last grow wild ; and, in my phrenzy, force at least this from you. (*Kissing her hand.*) Or if you'd have my flame soar higher still, then grant me this, and this, and thousands more. (*Kissing first her hand and then her neck.—Aside.*) For now's the time she melts into compassion.

LADY B. : Oh, heavens ! let me go.

CON. : Ay, go, ay ! where shall we go, my charming angel—into this private arbour ? Nay, let's lose no time—moments are precious——

LADY B. : And lovers wild. Pray, let us stop here ; at least for this time.

CON. : 'Tis impossible ! he that has power over you, can have none over himself.

[*As he is forcing her into the arbour,* LADY FANCIFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE *rush out upon them, and run across the stage.*

LADY B. : Ah ! I'm lost !

LADY F. : MADEM. : Fe, fe, fe ! [*Exeunt.*

CON. : Death and furies ! who are those ?

LADY B. : Oh, heavens ! I'm out of my wits. If they know me, I'm ruined.

CON. : Don't be frightened ; ten thousand to one they are strangers to you.

LADY B. : Whatever they are, I won't stay here a moment longer.

CON. : Whither will you go ?

LADY B. : Home, as if the devil were in me ! Lord ! where's this Belinda now ?

Enter BELINDA *and* HEARTFREE.

Oh ! 'tis well you are come ; I'm so frightened ! Let's begone, for heaven's sake !

BEL. : Lord ! what's the matter ?

LADY B. : The devil's the matter ! Here's a couple of women have done the most impertinent thing—away, away, away ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—LADY FANCIFUL'S *House.*

Enter LADY FANCIFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

LADY F. : Well, mademoiselle, did you dodge the filthy things ?

MADEM. : O qu'oui, madame.

LADY F. : And where are they ?

MADEM. : Au logis.

LADY F. : What, men and all ?

MADEM. : Tous ensemble.

LADY F. : Oh, confidence ! What, carry their fellows to their own house ?

MADEM. : C'est que le mari n'y est pas.

LADY F. : No, so I believe, truly. But he shall be there, and quickly, too, if I can find him out. Well, 'tis a prodigious thing to see, when men and women get together, how they fortify one another in their impudence. But if that drunken fool, her husband, be to be found in e'er a tavern in town, I'll send him amongst them : I'll spoil their sport.

MADEM. : En verité, madame, se seroit domage.

LADY F. : 'Tis in vain to oppose it, mademoiselle ; therefore, never go about it : for I am the steadiest creature in the world—when I am determined to do mischief. So come along. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—SIR JOHN BRUTE'S *House*.

Enter CONSTANT, HEARTFREE, LADY BRUTE, BELINDA, *and* LOVEWELL.

LADY B.: But are you sure you don't mistake, Lovewell?

LOVE.: Madam, I saw them all go into the tavern together; and my master so drunk, he could scarce stand.

LADY B.: Then, gentlemen, I believe we may venture to let you stay, and play at cards with us an hour or two; for they'll scarce part till morning.

BEL.: I think it's a pity they should ever part——

CON.: The company that's here, madam.

LADY B.: Then, sir, the company that's here must remember to part itself in time.

CON.: Madam, we don't intend to forfeit your future favours, by an indiscreet usage of this. The moment you give us the signal, we shan't fail to make our retreat.

LADY B.: Upon those conditions, then, let us sit down to cards.

LOVE.: Oh, lord! madam, here's my master just staggering in upon you: he has been quarrelsome yonder, and they have kicked him out of the company. [*Exit.*

LADY B.: Into the closet, gentlemen, for heaven's sake!

[CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE *run into the closet.*

Enter SIR JOHN BRUTE, *covered with dirt and blood.*

LADY B.: Ah! ah! he's all over blood!

SIR J.: What the plague does the woman squall for? Did you never see a man in a pickle before?

LADY B.: Lord! where have you been?

SIR J.: I have been at—cuffs.

LADY B.: I fear that is not all. I hope you are not wounded?

SIR J.: Sound as a roach, wife.

LADY B.: I'm mighty glad to hear it.

SIR J.: You know—I think you lie.

LADY B.: 'Tis a hard fate, I should not be believed.

SIR J.: 'Tis a d——d atheistical age, wife.

LADY B.: I am sure I have given you a thousand tender proofs how great my care is of you. But, spite of all your cruel thoughts, I still persist; and, at this moment, if I can, persuade you to lie down and sleep a little.

SIR J.: Why, do you think I am drunk, you slut you?

LADY B.: Heaven forbid I should! But I'm afraid you are feverish. Pray, let me feel your pulse.

SIR J.: Stand off, and be d——d.

LADY B.: Why, I see your distemper in your eyes: you are all on fire. Pray, go to bed; let me entreat you.

SIR J.: Come, kiss me, then.

LADY B. (*kissing him*): There! now go.—(*Aside.*) He stinks like poison.

SIR J.: I see it goes d——y against your stomach; and, therefore,—kiss me again.

LADY B.: Nay, now you fool me.

SIR J.: Do it, I say.

LADY B. (*aside*): Ah! lord have mercy upon me! Well—there! Now will you go?

SIR J.: Now, wife, you shall see my gratitude: you gave me two kisses; I'll give you—two hundred. [*Kisses and tumbles her.*

LADY B.: Oh, lord! pray, Sir John, be quiet! Heavens! what a pickle I am in.

SIR J. : So, now, you being as dirty and as nasty as myself, we may go pig together. But, first, I must have a cup of your cold tea, wife.

[*Going to the closet.*

LADY B. (*aside*) : Oh ! I am ruined ! There's none there, my dear.

SIR J. : I'll warrant you I'll find some, my dear.

LADY B. : You can't open the door ; the lock's spoiled : I have been turning and turning the key this half-hour, to no purpose. I'll send for the smith to-morrow.

SIR J. : There's ne'er a smith in Europe can open a door with more expedition than I can do. As for example :—(*He bursts open the door.*) How now ! What the devil have we got here ? Constant, Heartfree,—and two w— again, egad ! This is the worst cold tea that ever I met with in my life ! " I have been turning and turning——"

Enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE *from the closet.*

LADY B. (*aside*) : Oh, lord ; what will become of us !

SIR J. : Gentlemen, I am your very humble servant. I give you many thanks. I see you take care of my family : I shall do all I can to return the obligation.

CON. : Sir, how oddly soever this business may appear to you, you'd have no cause to be uneasy, if you knew the truth of all things. Your lady is the most virtuous woman in the world, and nothing has passed but an innocent frolic.

HEART. : Nothing else, upon my honour, sir.

SIR J. : You are both very civil gentlemen ; and my wife there, is a very civil gentlewoman ; therefore, I don't doubt but many civil things have passed between you. Your very humble servant.

LADY B. (*aside to* CONSTANT) : Pray, begone ; he's so drunk, he can't hurt us to-night, and to-morrow morning you shall hear from us.

CON. : I'll obey you, madam. Sir, when you are cool, you'll understand reason better : so, then, I shall take the pains to inform you ; if not, I wear a sword, sir, and so good b'ye. Come along, Heartfree. [*Exeunt.*

SIR J. : Wear a sword, sir ! And what, then, sir ? He comes to my house, eats my meat, lies with my wife, dishonours my family, gets a bastard to inherit my estate ; and when I ask a civil account of all this.—" Sir," says he, " I wear a sword." Wear a sword, sir ?—" Yes, sir," says he, " I wear a sword." It may be a good answer at cross purposes ; but 'tis a d——d one to a man in my whimsical circumstances. " Sir," says he, " I wear a sword." (*To* LADY B.) And what do you wear now ? Eh ! tell me (*Sitting down.*) What, you are modest, and can't ! why, then, I'll tell you, you slut, you :—you wear an impudent, lewd face ; a d——d designing heart ; and a tail—and a tail full of—— [*Falls fast asleep.*

LADY B. : So, thanks to kind heaven, he's fast for some hours !

BEL. : 'Tis well he is so, that we may have time to lay our story handsomely ; for we must lie like the devil to bring ourselves off.

LADY B. : What shall we say, Belinda ?

BEL. (*musing*) : I'll tell you ; it must all light upon Heartfree and me.

LADY B. : I'm beholden to you, cousin ; but that would be carrying the jest a little too far. But it's late : let's, out of an excess of charity, take a small care of that nasty drunken thing there. Do but look at him, Belinda.

BEL. : Ah ! it's a savoury dish.

LADY B. : As savoury as it is, I'm cloyed with it. Pr'ythee, call the butler to take away.

BEL. : Call the butler ! Call the scavenger. (*To a* SERVANT *within.*) Who's there ? Call Razor ; let him take away his master ; scour him clean, with a little soap and sand, and so put him to bed.

LADY B. : Come, Belinda, I'll e'en lie with you to-night, and, in the morning, we'll send for our gentlemen, to set this matter even.

BEL. : With all my heart.

LADY B. : Good night, my dear. [*Making a low courtesy to* SIR JOHN.

BOTH : Ha, ha, ha ! [*Exeunt.*

Enter RAZOR.

RAZOR : My lady, there, is a wag ; my master, there, is a cuckold. Marriage is a slippery thing ! Women have depraved appetites— My lady's a wag. I have heard all ; I have seen all ; I understand all ; and I'll tell all : for my little Frenchwoman loves news dearly. This story will gain her heart, or nothing will.—(*To* SIR J.) Come, sir, your head's too full of fumes at present, to make room for your jealousy ; but I reckon we shall have rare work with you, when your pate's empty. Come to your kennel, you cuckoldy, drunken sot, you ! [*Takes him on his back.*

My master's asleep in his chair, and a snoring,
My lady's abroad, and—*Oh ! rare matrimony.* [*Exit.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—LADY FANCIFUL'S *House.*

Enter LADY FANCIFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

LADY F. : But why did you not tell me before mademoiselle, that Razor and you were fond ?

MADEM. : De modesty hinder me, matam.

LADY F. : Why, truly, modesty does often hinder us from doing things we have an extravagant mind to. But does he love you well enough yet, to do anything you bid him ? Do you think, to oblige you, he would speak scandal ?

MADEM. : Matam, to oblige your ladyship, he shall speak anything.

LADY F. : Why, then, mademoiselle, I'll tell you what you shall do : you shall engage him to tell his master all that passed at Spring Gardens. I have a mind he shall know what a wife and a niece he has got.

MADEM. : Il le fera, madame.

Enter CORNET, *who speaks apart to* MADEMOISELLE.

CORN. : Mademoiselle, yonder's Mr. Razor desires to speak with you.

MADEM. : Tell him I come presently. (*Exit* CORNET.) Razor be dere, madame.

LADY F. : That's fortunate ! Well, I'll leave you together ; and, if you find him stubborn, mademoiselle—harkye !—don't refuse him a few reasonable little liberties, to put him in humour.

MADEM. : Laissez moi faire. [*Exit* LADY F.

RAZOR *peeps in ; and, seeing* LADY FANCIFUL *gone, turns to* MADEMOISELLE, *and kisses her.*

MADEM. : How now, confidence !

RAZOR : How now, modesty !

MADEM. : Who makes you so familiar, sirrah ?

RAZOR. : My impudence, hussy.

MADEM. : Stand off, rogue-face !

RAZOR : Ah ! mademoiselle, great news at our house.

MADEM. : Why, vat be de matter ?

RAZOR : The matter ! why uptails all's the matter.
MADEM. : Tu te mocque de moi.
RAZOR : Now do you long to know the particulars—the time when—the place where—the manner how—but I won't tell you a word more.
MADEM. : Nay, den dou kill me Razor.
RAZOR : Come, kiss me, then. [*Putting his hands behind.*
MADEM. : Nay, pridee, tell me.
RAZOR : Good b'ye. [*Going.*
MADEM. : Hold, hold ! I will kiss dee. [*Kissing him.*
RAZOR : So, that's civil ! Why, now, my pretty Poll, my goldfinch, my little water-wagtail, you must know that—Come, kiss me again.
MADEM. : I won't kiss de no more.
RAZOR : Good b'ye.
MADEM. : Doucement ! dere ! es tu content ? [*Kissing him.*
RAZOR : So, now I'll tell thee all. Why, the news is, that cuckoldom in folio is newly printed, and matrimony in quarto is just going into the press. Will you buy any books, mademoiselle.
MADEM. : Tu parle comme un libraire ; de devil, no understand dee !
RAZOR. : Why, then, that I may make myself intelligible to a waiting-woman, I'll speak like a valet-de-chambre : my lady has cuckolded my master.
MADEM. : Bon.
RAZOR : Which we take very ill from her hands, I can tell her that. We can't yet prove matter of fact upon her.
MADEM. : N'importe.
RAZOR : But we can prove, that matter of fact had like to have been upon her.
MADEM. : Ouy-da.
RAZOR : For we have such terrible circumstances—
MADEM. : Sans doute.
RAZOR : That any man of parts may draw tickling conclusions from them.
MADEM. : Fort bien.
RAZOR : We found a couple of tight, well-built gentlemen stuffed into her ladyship's closet.
MADEM : Le diable !
RAZOR : And I, in my particular person, have discovered a most d——e plot, how to persuade my poor master, that all this hide and seek, this will-in-the-wisp, has no other meaning than a Christian marriage for sweet Mrs. Belinda.
MADEM. : Un mariage ? Ah, les droles !
RAZOR : Don't you interrupt me, hussy !—'Tis agreed, I say ; and my innocent lady, to wriggle herself out at the back door of the business, turns marriage bawd to her niece, and resolves to deliver up her fair body to be tumbled and mumbled by that young liquorish whipster, Heartfree. Now are you satisfied ?
MADEM. : No.
RAZOR : Right woman ! always gaping for more.
MADEM. : Dis be all den, dat you know ?
RAZOR : All ! ay, and a great deal too, I think.
MADEM. : Dou be fool, dou know noteing. Ecoute, mon pauvre Razor ! Dou see des two eyes ? Des two eyes have see de devil.
RAZOR : The woman's mad !
MADEM. : In Spring Garden, dat rogue Constant meet dy lady.
RAZOR : Bon.
MADEM. : I'll tell dee no more.
RAZOR : Nay, pr'ythee, my swan !
MADEM. : Come, kiss me, den. [*Clapping her hands behind her, as he did before.*

RAZOR : I won't kiss you, not I.

MADEM. : Adieu ! [*Going.*

RAZOR : Hold ! (*Gives her a hearty kiss.*) Now proceed.

MADEM. : A çà—I hide myself in one cunning place, where I hear all and see all. First, dy drunken master come mal-à-propos ; but de sot no know his own dear wife, so he leave her to her sport : den de game begin. De lover say soft ting ; de lady look upon de ground. (*As she speaks* RAZOR *still acts the man, and she the woman.*) He takes her by de hand ; she turn her head on oder way. Den he squeeze very hard ; den she pull—very softly. Den he take her in his arms ; den she give him little pat. Den he tremble ; den she sigh. Den he pull her into the arbour ; den she pinch him.—

RAZOR : Ay, but not so hard, you baggage, you.

MADEM. : Den he grow bold ; she grow weak. He tro her down, il tombe dessu, le diable assist, il emport-tout—(RAZOR *struggles with her, as if he would throw her down.*)—Stand off, sirrah !

RAZOR : You have set me afire, you jade, you !

MADEM. : Den go to de river and quench dyself.

RAZOR : What an unnatural harlot this is !

MADEM. : Razor ! [*Looking languishingly on him.*

RAZOR : Mademoiselle !

MADEM. : Dou no love me ?

RAZOR : Not love thee ! More than a Frenchman does soup.

MADEM. : Den you will refuse nothing dat I bid dee ?

RAZOR : Don't bid me hang myself, then.

MADEM. : No ; only tell dy master all I have tell dee of dy lady.

RAZOR : Why, you little malicious strumpet, you ! should you like to be served so ?

MADEM. : Dou dispute, den ?—Adieu !

RAZOR : Hold !—But why wilt thou make be such a rogue, my dear ?

MADEM. : Voilà un vrai Anglois ! il est amoureux, et cependant il veut raisonner. Va t'en au diable !

RAZOR : Hold, once more ; in hope thou'lt give me up thy body, I'll make a present of my honesty.

MADEM. : Bon écoute donc ; if dou fail me, I never see dee more. If dou obey me, je m'abandonne à toi à toi.

[*She kisses him, and exit.*

RAZOR (licking his lips) : Not be a rogue !—*Amor vincit omnia.* [*Exit.*

Enter LADY FANCIFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

LADY F. : Marry, say ye ? Will the two things marry ?

MADEM. : On le va faire, madame.

LADY F. : Look you, mademoiselle—in short, I can't bear it—no, I find I can't. Therefore, run and call Razor back immediately ; for something must be done to stop this impertinent wedding. If I can but defer it four and twenty hours, I'll make such work about town, with that little pert slut's reputation, he shall as soon marry a witch.

MADEM. (*aside*) : La voilà bien intentionée. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—CONSTANT'S *Lodgings.*

Enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

CON. : But what dost think will become of this business ?

HEART. : 'Tis easier to think what will not become on't.

CON. : What's that ?

HEART. : A challenge. I know the knight too well for that ; his dear body will always prevail upon his noble soul to be quiet.

CON. : But though he dare not challenge me, perhaps he may venture to challenge his wife.

HEART. : Not if you whisper him in the ear, you won't have him do't ; and there's no other way left that I see. For, as drunk as he was, he'll remember you and I were where we should not be ; and I don't think him quite blockhead enough yet, to be persuaded we were got into his wife's closet only to peep into her prayer-book.

Enter a SERVANT, *with a letter.*

SERV. : Sir, here's a letter : a porter brought it.

CON. : Oh, ho ! here's instructions for us. (*Reads*) " The accident that has happened has touched our invention to the quick. We would fain come off without your help, but find that's impossible. In a word, the whole business must be thrown upon a matrimonial intrigue between your friend and mine ; but if the parties are not fond enough to go quite through with the matter, 'tis sufficient for our turn, they own the design. We'll find pretences enough to break the match. Adieu ! "—Well, women for invention ! How long would my block head have been producing this, eh ! Heartfree ? What, musing, man ? Pr'ythee, be cheerful. What sayest thou, friend, to this matrimonial remedy ?

HEART. : Why, I say, it's worse than the disease.

CON. : Here's a fellow for you ! There's beauty and money on her side, and love up to the ears on his ; and yet——

HEART. : And yet, I think, I may reasonably be allowed to boggle at marrying the niece, in the very moment that you are deluding the aunt.

CON. : Why, truly, there may be something in that. But have not you a good opinion enough of your own parts, to believe you could keep a wife to yourself ?

HEART. : I should have, if I had a good opinion enough of hers, to believe she could do as much by me. But, pr'ythee, advise me in this good and evil, this life and death, this blessing and curse, that is set before me. Shall I marry, or die a maid ?

CON. : Why 'faith, Heartfree, matrimony is like an army going to engage : love's the forlorn hope, which is soon cut off ; the marriage knot is the main body, which may stand buff a long time ; and repentance is the rear guard, which rarely gives ground as long as the main body has a being.

HEART. : Conclusion, then ; you advise me to rake on as you do.

CON. : That's not concluded yet ; for, though marriage be a lottery, in which there are wondrous many blanks, yet there is one inestimable lot in which the only heaven on earth is written. Would your kind fate but guide your hand to that, though I were wrapped in all that luxury itself could clothe me with, I should envy you.

HEART. : And justly, too ; for to be capable of loving one, doubtless, is better than to possess a thousand ; but how far that capacity's in me, alas ! I know not.

CON. : But you would know ?

HEART. : I would so.

CON. : Matrimony will inform you. Come, one flight of resolution carries you to the land of experience ; where, in a very moderate time, you'll know the capacity of your soul and your body both, or I'm mistaken. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—SIR JOHN BRUTE'S.

Enter LADY BRUTE *and* BELINDA.

BEL. : Well, madam, what answer have you from them ?

LADY B. : That they'll be here this moment. I fancy 'twill end in a wedding : I'm sure he's a fool if it don't. Ten thousand pounds, and such a lass as you are, is no contemptible offer to a younger brother.

Enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

Good morrow, gentlemen ; how have you slept after your adventure ?

HEART. : Some careful thoughts, ladies, on your accounts, have kept us waking.

BEL. : And some careful thoughts on your own, I believe, have hindered you from sleeping. Pray how does this matrimonial project relish with you ?

HEART. : Why, 'faith, e'en as storming towns does with soldiers, where the hopes of delicious plunder banishes the fear of being knocked on the head.

BEL. : Is it, then, possible, after all, that you dare think of downright lawful wedlock ?

HEART. : Madam, you have made me so foolhardy, I dare do anything.

BEL. : Then, sir, I challenge you, and matrimony's the spot where I expect you.

HEART. : 'Tis enough ; I'll not fail. (*Aside.*) So, now I am in for Hobbes's voyage ; a great leap in the dark.

LADY B. : Well, gentlemen, this matter being concluded, then, have you got your lessons ready ? for Sir John is grown such an atheist of late, he'll believe nothing upon easy terms.

CON. : We'll find means to extend his faith, madam. But, pray, how do you find him this morning ?

LADY B. : Most lamentably morose ; chewing the cud after last night's discovery ; of which, however, he has but a confused notion, even now. But I'm afraid the valet de chambre has told him all ; for they are very busy together at this moment. When I told him of Belinda's marriage, I had no other answer but a grunt ; from which you may draw what conclusion you think fit.—But to your notes, gentlemen ; he's here.

Enter SIR JOHN BRUTE *and* RAZOR.

CON. : Good morrow, sir.

HEART. : Good morrow, Sir John ; I'm very sorry my indiscretion should cause so much disorder in your family.

SIR J. : Disorders generally come from indiscretion, sir ; 'tis no strange thing at all.

LADY B. : I hope, my dear, you are satisfied there was no wrong intended you.

SIR J. : None, my dove.

BEL. : If not, I hope my consent to marry Mr. Heartfree will convince you ; for, as little as I know of amours, sir, I can assure you, one intrigue is enough to bring four people together, without further mischief.

SIR J. : And I know, too, that intrigues tend to procreation of more kinds than one. One intrigue will beget another, as soon as beget a son or a daughter.

CON. : I am very sorry, sir, to see you still seem unsatisfied with a lady, whose more than common virtue, I am sure, were she my wife, should meet a better usage.

SIR J. : Sir, if her conduct has put a trick upon her virtue, her virtue's the bubble, but her husband's the loser.

CON. : Sir, you have received a sufficient answer already, to justify both her conduct and mine. You'll pardon me for meddling in your family affairs ;

but I perceive I am the man you are jealous of, and therefore it concerns me.

SIR J. : Would it did not concern me, and then I should not care who it concerned.

CON. : Well, sir, if truth and reason won't content you, I know but one way more, which, if you think fit, you may take.

SIR J. : Lord, sir, you are very hasty : if I had been found at prayers in your wife's closet, I should have allowed you twice as much time to come to yourself in.

CON. : Nay, sir, if time be all you want, we have no quarrel.

HEART. : I told you how the sword would work upon him.

[SIR JOHN *muses.*

CON. : Let him muse ; however, I'll lay fifty pounds our foreman brings us in not guilty.

SIR J. (*aside*) : 'Tis very well—'tis very well. In spite of that young jade's matrimonial intrigue, I am a downright stinking cuckold. Here they are. Boo—(*Putting his hand to his forehead.*) Methinks, I could butt with a bull. What the plague did I marry for ? I know she did not like me ; but that's past. And now what shall I do with her ? If I put my horns into my pocket, she'll grow insolent—if I don't, that goat there, that stallion, is ready to whip me through the guts. The debate then is reduced to this ; shall I die a hero, or live a rascal ? Why, wiser men than I have long since concluded, that a living dog is better than a dead lion. (*To* CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.) Gentlemen, now my wine and my passion are governable, I must own, I have never observed anything in my wife's course of life, to back me in my jealousy of her : but jealousy's a mark of love ; so she need not trouble her head about it, as long as I make no more words on't.

Enter LADY FANCIFUL *disguised, and addresses* BELINDA *apart.*

CON. : I'm glad to see your reason rule at least. Give me your hand : I hope you'll look upon me as you used to do.

SIR J. : Your humble servant. (*Aside.*) A wheedling son of a whore ?

HEART. : And that I may be sure you are friends with me, too, pray give me your consent to wed your niece.

SIR J. : Sir, you have it with all my heart ; d——n me if you haven't. (*Aside.*) 'Tis time to get rid of her ; a young pert pimp ; she'll make an incomparable bawd in a little time.

Enter a servant who gives HEARTFREE *a letter.*

BEL. : Heartfree your husband, say you ? 'Tis impossible !

LADY F. : Would to kind heaven it were ! but 'tis too true ; and in the world there lives not such a wretch. I'm young ; and either I have been flattered by my friends, as well as my glass, or nature has been kind and generous to me. I had a fortune too was greater far than he could ever hope for ; but with my heart I am robbed of all the rest. I am slighted and I'm beggared both at once ; I have scarcely a bare subsistence from the villain, yet dare complain to none ; for he has sworn, if ever 'tis known I am his wife, he'll murder me. [*Weeping.*

BEL. : The traitor !

LADY F. : I accidentally was told he courted you ; charity soon prevailed upon me to prevent your misery ; and, as you see, I'm still so generous even to him, as not to suffer he should do anything, for which the law might take away his life. [*Weeping.*

BEL. : Poor creature ! How I pity her ! [*They continue talking aside.*

HEART. (*aside*) : Death and the devil !—Let me read it again. (*Reads*). " Though I have a particular reason not to let you know who I am till I see you, yet you'll easily believe 'tis a faithful friend that gives you this advice. [Good !] I have a child by Belinda—(Better and better)—which is now out at nurse—(Heaven be praised !)—and I think the foundation laid for another—(Ha ! old true-penny !)—no rack could have tortured this story from me ; but friendship has done it. I heard of your design to marry her, and could not see you abused. Make use of my advice, but keep my secret till I ask you for it again." [*Exit* LADY FANCIFUL.

CON. (*to* BELINDA) : Come, madam, shall we send for the parson ? I doubt here's no business for the lawyers ; younger brothers have nothing to settle but their hearts, and that I believe my friend here has already done very faithfully.

BEL. (*scornfully*) : Are you sure, sir, there are no old mortgages upon it ?

HEART. (*coldly*) : If you think there are, madam, it mayn't be amiss to defer the mortgage till you are sure they are paid off.

BEL. : We'll defer it as long as you please, sir.

HEART. : The more time we take to consider on't, madam, the less apt we shall be to commit oversight : therefore, if you please, we will put it off for just nine months.

BEL. : Guilty consciences make men cowards.

HEART. : And they make women desperate.

BEL. : I don't wonder you want time to resolve.

HEART. : I don't wonder you are so quickly determined.

BEL. : What does the fellow mean ?

HEART. : What does the lady mean ?

SIR J. : Zoons ! what do you both mean ?

[HEARTFREE *and* BELINDA *walk about.*

RAZOR (*aside.*) : Here is so much sport going to be spoiled, it makes me ready to weep again. A pox o' this impertinent Fanciful, and her plots, and her Frenchwoman too ; I hear them tittering without still. Ecod, I'll e'en go lug them both by the ears, and discover the plot, to secure my pardon. [*Exit.*

CON. : Pr'ythee, explain, Heartfree.

HEART. : A fair deliverance ; thank my stars and my friend !

BEL. : 'Tis well it went no farther ; a base fellow !

LADY B. : What can be the meaning of all this ?

BEL. : What's his meaning, I don't know ; but mine is, that if I had married him, I had had no husband.

HEART. : And what's her meaning, I don't know ; but mine is, that if I had married her, I had had wife enough.

SIR J. : Your people of wit have got such cramp ways of expressing themselves, they seldom comprehend one another. Pox take you both, will you speak in the language of common sense, that you may be understood ?

Enter RAZOR, *pulling in* LADY FANCIFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

RAZOR : If they won't, here comes an interpreter.

LADY B. : Heavens ! What have we here ?

RAZOR : A villain—but a repenting villain.

LADY B. : What means this ?

RAZOR : Nothing without my pardon.

LADY B. : What pardon do you want ?

RAZOR : Imprimis, your ladyship's, for a d——e lie made upon your spotless virtue, and set to the tune of Spring Garden (*To* SIR JOHN). Next at my generous master's feet I bend, for interrupting his more noble thoughts with phantoms of disgraceful cuckoldom. (*To* CONSTANT.) Thirdly, I to this gentleman apply, for making him the hero of my romance. (*To* HEARTFREE.) Fourthly, your pardon, noble sir, I ask, for clandestinely marrying you, without either bidding of bans, bishop's license, friends' consent, or your own knowledge. (*To* BELINDA.) And lastly, to my good young lady's clemency I come, for pretending the corn was sowed in the ground, before ever the plough had been in the field.

SIR J. (*aside*) : So that, after all, 'tis a moot point whether I am a cuckold or not.

BEL. : Well, sir, upon condition you confess all, I'll pardon you myself, and try to obtain as much from the rest of the company. But I must know then who 'tis has put you upon all this mischief.

RAZOR : Satan and his equipage ; women tempted me, vice weakened me—and so the devil overcame me : as fell Adam, so fell I.

BEL. : Then pray, Mr. Adam, will you make us acquainted with your Eve ?

RAZOR (*to* MADEMOISELLE) : Unmask, for the honour of France.

ALL : Mademoiselle !

MADEM. : Me ask ten thousand pardon of all de good company.

SIR J. : Why, this mystery thickens instead of clearing up. (*To* RAZOR.) You son of a whore you, put us out of our pain.

RAZOR : One moment brings sunshine. (*Shewing* MADEMOISELLE.) 'Tis true, this is the woman that tempted me, but this is the serpent that tempted the woman ; and if my prayers might be heard, her punishment for so doing should be like the serpents of old—(*Pulls off* LADY FANCIFUL's *mask*) she should lie upon her face all the days of her life.

ALL : Lady Fanciful !

BEL. : Impertinent !

LADY B. : Ridiculous !

ALL : Ha, ha, ha !

BEL. : I hope your ladyship will give me leave to wish you joy, since you have owned your marriage yourself. (*To* HEARTFREE.) I vow 'twas strangely wicked in you to think of another wife, when you have one already so charming as her ladyship.

ALL : Ha, ha, ha !

LADY F. (*aside*) : Confusion seize them, as it seizes me. Your mirth's as nauseous as yourself. Belinda, you think you triumph over a rival now ; helas ! ma pauvre fille. Where'er I'm a rival, there's no cause for mirth. No, my poor wretch, 'tis from another principle I have acted. I knew that thing there would make so perverse a husband, and you so impertinent a wife, that, lest your mutual plagues should make you run both mad, I charitably would have broken the match. He, he, he ! [*Exit, laughing affectedly.*

MADEM. : He, he, he ! [*Exit, following her.*

ALL : Ha, ha, ha !

SIR J. (*aside*) : Why now, this woman will be married to somebody, too.

BEL. : Poor creature ! what a passion she is in ! but I forgive her.

HEART. : Since you have so much goodness for her, I hope you'll pardon my offence too, madam ?

BEL. : There will be no great difficulty in that, since I am guilty of an equal fault.

HEART. : Then let's to church ;
And if it be our chance to disagree—

BEL. : Take heed ! the surly husband's fate you see.
SIR J. : Surly I may be, stubborn I am not.
For I have both forgiven and forgot ;
If so, be these our judges, Mrs. Pert,
If they approve,
'Tis more their goodness, than our desert. [*Exeunt.*

1700

THE WAY OF THE WORLD
(By WILLIAM CONGREVE)

IN *The Way of the World*, the Comedy of Manners comes to a head. Within its limitations, the play is perfect. It was nevertheless a complete failure on the stage that imposed those limitations. There is a particular irony in the situation, because its author, William Congreve (1670–1729), had, only three years before its production, achieved an immense success with a tragedy, *The Mourning Bride*, which, while it contained a descriptive passage held by Dr. Johnson to be above any other in English drama, has long since been found to be, as drama, almost without any merit. He had also been successful with three comedies, *The Old Bachelor* (1693), *The Double Dealer* (1694), and *Love for Love* (1695), all of them essays in the art that in *The Way of the World* attains its most finished expression.

Two years before the ill-fated production, Jeremy Collier, a sort of Dean Inge, had denounced the Comedy of Manners in his *Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage*. The bombshell effect of this manifesto was to some extent reflected in the poor reception accorded the play. Congreve was furious and refused to write any more plays for such a public. As he persisted in this refusal for the remaining twenty-eight years of his life, it is safe to conclude that he had no more plays in him to write.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

Characters

FAINALL, *in love with Mrs. Marwood*
MIRABELL, *in love with Mrs. Millamant*
WITWOUD, PETULANT } *Followers of Mrs. Millamant*
SIR WILFULL WITWOUD, *Half-brother to Witwoud, and Nephew to Lady Wishfort*
WAITWELL, *Servant to Mirabell*
LADY WISHFORT, *Enemy to Mirabell, for having falsely pretended love to her*
MRS. MILLAMANT, *a fine lady, Niece to Lady Wishfort, and loves Mirabell*
MRS. MARWOOD, *Friend to Mr. Fainall, and likes Mirabell*
MRS. FAINALL, *Daughter to Lady Wishfort, and wife to Fainall, formerly friend to Mirabell*
FOIBLE, *Woman to Lady Wishfort*
MINCING, *Woman to Mrs. Millamant*

DANCERS, FOOTMEN, *and* ATTENDANTS.

Scene—LONDON.

The time equal to that of the presentation.

ACT I

A Chocolate-house.

MIRABELL *and* FAINALL (*rising from Cards*), BETTY *waiting.*

MIRA. : You are a fortunate man, Mr. Fainall.

FAIN. : Have we done ?

MIRA. : What you please. I'll play on to entertain you.

FAIN. : No, I'll give you your revenge another time, when you are not so indifferent ; you are thinking of something else now, and play too negligently ; the coldness of a losing gamester lessens the pleasure of the winner. I'd no more play with a man that slighted his ill fortune, than I'd make love to a woman who undervalued the loss of her reputation.

MIRA. : You have a taste extreamly delicate, and are for refining on your pleasures.

FAIN. : Prithee, why so reserved ? Something has put you out of humour.

MIRA. : Not at all : I happen to be grave to-day ; and you are gay ; that's all.

FAIN. : Confess, Millamant and you quarrelled last night, after I left you ; my fair cousin has some humours that would tempt the patience of a Stoick. What, some coxcomb came in, and was well received by her while you were by.

MIRA. : Witwoud and Petulant ; and what was worse, her aunt, your wife's mother, my evil genius ; or to sum up all in her own name, my old Lady Wishfort came in——

FAIN. : O there it is then—she has a lasting passion for you, and with reason.—What, then my wife was there ?

MIRA. : Yes, and Mrs. Marwood and three or four more, whom I never saw before ; seeing me, they all put on their grave faces, whispered one another, then complained aloud of the vapours, and after fell into a profound silence.

FAIN. : They had a mind to be rid of you.

MIRA. : For which reason I resolved not to stir. At last the good old lady broke through her painful taciturnity, with an invective against long visits. I would not have understood her, but Millamant joining in the argument, I rose and with a constrained smile told her I thought nothing was so easie as to know when a visit began to be troublesome ; she reddened and I withdrew, without expecting her reply.

FAIN. : You were to blame to resent what she spoke only in compliance with her aunt.

MIRA. : She is more mistress of herself, than to be under the necessity of such a resignation.

FAIN. : What ? though half her fortune depends upon her marrying with my lady's approbation ?

MIRA. : I was then in such a humour, that I should have been better pleased if she had been less discreet.

FAIN. : Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you ; last night was one of their cabal-nights ; they have 'em three times a week, and meet by turns, at one another's apartments, where they come together like the coroner's inquest, to sit upon the murdered reputations of the week. You and I are excluded ; and it was once proposed that all the male sex should be excepted ; but somebody moved that to avoid scandal there might be one man of the community ; upon which motion Witwoud and Petulant were enrolled members.

MIRA. : And who may have been the foundress of this sect ? My Lady Wishfort, I warrant, who publishes her detestation of mankind ; and full of the vigour

of fifty-five, declares for a friend and ratafia ; and let posterity shift for itself, she'll breed no more.

FAIN. : The discovery of your sham addresses to her, to conceal your love to her niece, has provoked this separation : had you dissembled better, things might have continued in the state of nature.

MIRA. : I did as much as man could, with any reasonable conscience ; I proceeded to the very last act of flattery with her, and was guilty of a song in her commendation. Nay, I got a friend to put her into a lampoon, and complement her with the imputation of an affair with a young fellow, which I carried so far, that I told her the malicious town took notice that she was grown fat of a sudden ; and when she lay in of a dropsie, persuaded her she was reported to be in labour. The devil's in't, if an old woman is to be flattered further, unless a man should endeavour downright personally to debauch her ; and that my vertue forbad me. But for the discovery of this amour, I am indebted to your friend, or your wife's friend, Mrs. Marwood.

FAIN. : What should provoke her to be your enemy, unless she has made you advances, which you have slighted ? Women do not easily forgive omissions of that nature.

MIRA. : She was always civil to me, 'till of late ; I confess I am not one of those coxcombs who are apt to interpret a woman's good manners to her prejudice ; and think that she who does not refuse 'em everything, can refuse 'em nothing.

FAIN. : You are a gallant man, Mirabell ; and though you may have cruelty enough, not to satisfie a lady's longing ; you have too much generosity, not to be tender of her honour. Yet you speak with an indifference which seems to be affected ; and confesses you are conscious of a negligence.

MIRA. : You pursue the argument with a distrust that seems to be unaffected, and confesses you are conscious of a concern for which the lady is more indebted to you, than is your wife.

FAIN. : Fie, fie, friend, if you grow censorious I must leave you ;—I'll look upon the gamesters in the next room.

MIRA. : Who are they ?

FAIN. : Petulant and Witwoud.—Bring me some chocolate. [*Exit.*

MIRA. : Betty, what says your clock.

BET. : Turned of the last canonical hour, sir. [*Exit.*

MIRA. : How pertinently the jade answers me ! Ha ! almost one a clock ! (*Looking on his watch*) O, y'are come—— (*Enter* FOOTMAN.) Well, is the grand affair over ? You have been something tedious.

SERV. : Sir, there's such coupling at Pancras, that they stand behind one another, as 'twere in a country dance. Ours was the last couple to lead up ; and no hopes appearing of dispatch, besides, the parson growing hoarse, we were afraid his lungs would have failed before it came to our turn ; so we drove round to Duke's Place ; and there they were riveted in a trice.

MIRA. : So, so you are sure they are married.

SERV. : Married and bedded, sir ; I am witness.

MIRA. : Have you the certificate ?

SERV. : Here it is, sir.

MIRA. : Has the tailor brought Waitwell's cloaths home, and the new liveries ?

SERV. : Yes, sir.

MIRA. : That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye hear, and adjourn the consummation 'till farther order ; bid Waitwell shake his ears, and Dame Partlet rustle up her feathers, and meet me at one a clock by Rosamond's Pond ; that I may see her before she returns to her lady : and as you tender your ears be secret. [*Exit* FOOTMAN.

Enter FAINALL *and* BETTY.

FAIN. : Joy of your success, Mirabell ; you look pleased.

MIRA. : Ay ; I have been engaged in a matter of some sort of mirth, which is not yet ripe for discovery. I am glad this is not a cabal-night. I wonder, Fainall, that you who are married, and of consequence should be discreet, will suffer your wife to be of such a party.

FAIN. : Faith, I am not jealous. Besides, most who are engaged are women and relations ; and for the men, they are of a kind too contemptible to give scandal.

MIRA. : I am of another opinion. The greater the coxcomb, always the more the scandal : for a woman who is not a fool, can have but one reason for associating with a man who is one.

FAIN. : Are you jealous as often as you see Witwoud entertained by Millamant ?

MIRA. : Of her understanding I am, if not of her person.

FAIN. : You do her wrong ; for to give her her due, she has wit.

MIRA. : She has beauty enough to make any man think so ; and complaisance enough not to contradict him who shall tell her so.

FAIN. : For a passionate lover, methinks you are a man somewhat too discerning in the failings of your mistress.

MIRA. : And for a discerning man, somewhat too passionate a lover ; for I like her with all her faults ; nay, like her for her faults. Her follies are so natural, or so artful, that they become her ; and those affectations which in another woman would be odious, serve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, Fainall, she once used me with that insolence, that in revenge I took her to pieces ; sifted her, and separated her failings ; I studied 'em, and got 'em by rote. The catalogue was so large, that I was not without hopes, one day or other, to hate her heartily : to which end I so used myself to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me every hour less and less disturbance ; 'till in a few days it became habitual to me, to remember 'em without being displeased. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties ; and in all probability in a little time longer I shall like 'em as well.

FAIN. : Marry her, marry her ; be half as well acquainted with her charms, as you are with her defects, and my life on't, you are your own man again.

MIRA. : Say you so ?

FAIN. : I, I, I have experience : I have a wife, and so forth.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESS. : Is one Squire Witwoud here ?

BET. : Yes ; what's your business ?

MESS. : I have a letter for him, from his brother, Sir Wilfull, which I am charged to deliver into his own hands.

BET. : He's in the next room, friend—that way. [*Exit* MESSENGER.

MIRA. : What, is the chief of that noble family in town, Sir Wilfull Witwoud ?

FAIN. : He is expected to-day. Do you know him ?

MIRA. : I have seen him, he promises to be an extraordinary person ; I think you have the honour to be related to him.

FAIN. : Yes ; he is half-brother to this Witwoud by a former wife, who was sister to my Lady Wishfort, my wife's mother. If you marry Millamant, you must call cousins too.

MIRA. : I had rather be his relation than his acquaintance.

FAIN. : He comes to town in order to equip himself for travel.

MIRA. : For travel ! Why the man that I mean is above forty.

FAIN. : No matter for that ; 'tis for the honour of England, that all Europe should know we have blockheads of all ages.

MIRA. : I wonder there is not an act of parliament to save the credit of the nation, and prohibit the exportation of fools.

FAIN. : By no means, 'tis better as 'tis ; 'tis better to trade with a little loss, than to be quite eaten up, with being overstocked.

MIRA. : Pray, are the follies of this knight-errant, and those of the squire his brother, anything related ?

FAIN. : Not at all ; Witwoud grows by the knight, like a medlar grafted on a crab. One will melt in your mouth, and t'other set your teeth on edge ; one is all pulp, and the other all core.

MIRA. : So one will be rotten before he be ripe, and the other will be rotten without ever being ripe at all.

FAIN. : Sir Wilfull is an odd mixture of bashfulness and obstinacy.—But when he's drunk, he's as loving as the monster in the " Tempest ; " and much after the same manner. To give t'other his due, he has something of good nature, and does not always want wit.

MIRA. : Not always ; but as often as his memory fails him, and his commonplace of comparisons. He is a fool with a good memory, and some few scraps of other folks' wit. He is one whose conversation can never be approved, yet it is now and then to be endured. He has indeed one good quality, he is not exceptious ; for he so passionately affects the reputation of understanding raillery, that he will construe an affront into a jest ; and call downright rudeness and ill language, satire and fire.

FAIN. : If you have a mind to finish his picture, you have an opportunity to do it at full length. Behold the original.

Enter WITWOUD.

WIT. : Afford me your compassion, my dears ; pity me, Fainall, Mirabell, pity me.

MIRA. : I do from my soul.

FAIN. : Why, what's the matter ?

WIT. : No letters for me, Betty ?

BET. : Did not a messenger bring you one but now, sir ?

WIT. : Ay, but no other ?

BET. : No, sir.

WIT. : That's hard, that's very hard ;—a messenger, a mule, a beast of burden, he has brought me a letter from the fool my brother, as heavy as a panegyrick in a funeral sermon, or a copy of commendatory verses from one poet to another. And what's worse, 'tis as sure a forerunner of the author, as an epistle dedicatory.

MIRA. : A fool, and your brother, Witwoud !

WIT. : Ay, ay, my half-brother. My half-brother he is, no nearer upon honour.

MIRA. : Then 'tis possible he may be but half a fool.

WIT. : Good, good, Mirabell, *le drole !* Good, good, hang him, don't let's talk of him ;—Fainall, how does your lady ? Gad ! I say anything in the world to get this fellow out of my head. I beg pardon that I should ask a man of pleasure, and the town, a question at once so foreign and domestick. But I talk like an old maid at a marriage, I don't know what I say : but she's the best woman in the world.

FAIN. : 'Tis well you don't know what you say, or else your commendation would go near to make me either vain or jealous.

WIT. : No man in town lives well with a wife but Fainall. Your judgment, Mirabell ?

MIRA. : You had better step and ask his wife, if you would be credibly informed.

WIT. : Mirabell.

MIRA. : Ay.

WIT. : My dear, I ask ten thousand pardons ;—Gad I have forgot what I was going to say to you.

MIRA. : I thank you heartily, heartily.

WIT. : No, but prithee excuse me,—my memory is such a memory.

MIRA. : Have a care of such apologies, Witwoud ;—for I never knew a fool but he affected to complain, either of the spleen or his memory.

FAIN. : What have you done with Petulant ?

WIT. : He's reckoning his mony,—my mony it was—I have no luck to-day.

FAIN. : You may allow him to win of you at play ;—for you are sure to be too hard for him at repartee : since you monopolise the wit that is between you, the fortune must be his of course.

MIRA. : I don't find that Petulant confesses the superiority of wit to be your talent, Witwoud.

WIT. : Come, come, you are malicious now, and would breed debates—Petulant's my friend, and a very honest fellow, and a very pretty fellow, and has a smattering—faith and troth a pretty deal of an odd sort of a small wit : Nay, I'll do him justice. I'm his friend, I won't wrong him.—And if he had any judgment in the world,—he would not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the merits of my friend.

FAIN. : You don't take your friend to be over-nicely bred.

WIT. : No, no, hang him, the rogue has no manners at all, that I must own—no more breeding than a bum-baily, that I grant you.—'Tis pity ; the fellow has fire and life.

MIRA. : What, courage ?

WIT. : Hum, faith I don't know as to that,—I can't say as to that.—Yes, faith, in a controversie he'll contradict anybody.

MIRA. : Though 'twere a man whom he feared, or a woman whom he loved.

WIT. : Well, well, he does not always think before he speaks ;—We have all our failings ; you are too hard upon him, you are, faith. Let me excuse him,—I can defend most of his faults, except one or two ; one he has, that's the truth on't, if he were my brother, I could not acquit him—that indeed I could wish were otherwise.

MIRA. : Ay marry, what's that, Witwoud ?

WIT. : O pardon me—expose the infirmities of my friend.—No, my dear, excuse me there.

FAIN. : What I warrant he's unsincere, or 'tis some such trifle.

WIT. : No, no, what if he be ? 'Tis no matter for that, his wit will excuse that : a wit should no more be sincere, than a woman constant ; one argues a decay of parts, as t'other of beauty.

MIRA. : Maybe you think him too positive ?

WIT. : No, no, his being positive is an incentive to argument, and keeps up conversation.

FAIN. : Too illiterate.

WIT. : That ! that's his happiness—his want of learning gives him the more opportunities to shew his natural parts.

MIRA. : He wants words.

WIT. : Ay ; but I like him for that now ; for his want of words gives me the pleasure very often to explain his meaning.

FAIN. : He's impudent.

WIT. : No, that's not it.

MIRA. : Vain.

WIT. : No.

MIRA. : What, he speaks unseasonable truths sometimes, because he has not wit enough to invent an evasion.

WIT. : Truth ! Ha, ha, ha ! No, no, since you will have it,—I mean, he never speaks truth at all,—that's all. He will lie like a chambermaid, or a woman of quality's porter. Now that is a fault.

Enter COACHMAN.

COACH. : Is Master Petulant here, mistress ?

BET. : Yes.

COACH. : Three gentlewomen in a coach would speak with him.

FAIN. : O brave Petulant, three !

BET. : I'll tell him.

COACH. : You must bring two dishes of chocolate and a glass of cinnamon-water.

[*Exeunt* BETTY *and* COACHMAN.

WIT. : That should be for two fasting strumpets, and a bawd troubled with wind. Now you may know what the three are.

MIRA. : You are very free with your friend's acquaintance.

WIT. : Ay, ay, friendship without freedom is as dull as love without enjoyment or wine without toasting ; but to tell you a secret, these are trulls whom he allows coach-hire, and something more by the week, to call on him once a day at publick places.

MIRA. : How !

WIT. : You shall see he won't go to 'em because there's no more company here to take notice of him—Why this is nothing to what he used to do ;—before he found out this way, I have known him call for himself——

FAIN. : Call for himself ? What dost thou mean ?

WIT. : Mean, why he would slip you out of this chocolate-house, just when you had been talking to him—as soon as your back was turned—whip he was gone ;—then trip to his lodging, clap on a hood and scarf, and a mask, slap into a hackney-coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice ; where he would send in for himself, that I mean, call for himself, wait for himself, nay and what's more, not finding himself, sometimes leave a letter for himself.

MIRA. : I confess this is something extraordinary—I believe he waits for himself now, he is so long coming ; O I ask his pardon.

Enter PETULANT *and* BETTY.

BET. : Sir, the coach stays.

PET. : Well, well ; I come.—'Sbud a man had as good be a professed midwife, as a professed whoremaster, at this rate ; to be knocked up and raised at all hours, and in all places. Pox on 'em, I won't come—D'ye hear, tell 'em I won't come.—Let 'em snivel and cry their hearts out.

FAIN. : You are very cruel, Petulant.

PET. : All's one, let it pass—I have a humour to be cruel.

MIRA. : I hope they are not persons of condition that you use at this rate.

PET. : Condition, condition's a dried fig, if I am not in humour.—By this hand, if they were your—a—a—your what-dee-call-'ems themselves, they must wait or rub off, if I want appetite.

MIRA. : What-dee-call-'ems ! What are they, Witwoud ?

WIT. : Empresses, my dear—by your what-dee-call-'ems he means sultana queens.

PET. : Ay, Roxolana's.

MIRA. : Cry you mercy.

FAIN. : Witwoud says they are——
PET. : What does he say th'are ?
WIT. : I ; fine ladies I say.
PET. : Pass on, Witwoud—Harkee, by this light his relations—two co-heiresses his cousins, and an old aunt, who loves catterwauling better than a conventicle.
WIT. : Ha, ha, ha ; I had a mind to see how the rogue would come off.—Ha, ha, ha ; Gad I can't be angry with him, if he had said they were my mother and my sisters.
MIRA. : No !
WIT. : No ; the rogue's wit and readiness of invention charm me, dear Petulant.
BET. : They are gone, sir, in great anger.
PET. : Enough, let 'em trundel. Anger helps complexion, saves paint.
FAIN. : This continence is all dissembled ; this is in order to have something to brag of the next time he makes court to Millamant, and swear he has abandoned the whole sex for her sake.
MIRA. : Have you not left off your impudent pretensions there yet ? I shall cut your throat, sometime or other, Petulant, about that business.
PET. : Ay, ay, let that pass—there are other throats to be cut.—
MIRA. : Meaning mine, sir ?
PET. : Not I—I mean nobody—I know nothing.—But there are uncles and nephews in the world—and they may be rivals—What then ? All's one for that——
MIRA. : How ! Harkee, Petulant, come hither—Explain, or I shall call your interpreter.
PET. : Explain ; I know nothing.—Why you have an uncle, have you not, lately come to town, and lodges by my Lady Wishfort's ?
MIRA. : True.
PET. : Why that's enough—you and he are not friends ; and if he should marry and have a child, you may be disinherited, ha ?
MIRA. : Where hast thou stumbled upon all this truth ?
PET. : All's one for that ; why then say I know something.
MIRA. : Come, thou art an honest fellow, Petulant, and shalt make love to my mistress, thou shalt, faith. What hast thou heard of my uncle ?
PET. : I, nothing I. If throats are to be cut, let swords clash ; snug's the word, I shrug and am silent.
MIRA. : O raillery, raillery. Come, I know thou art in the women's secrets.—What you're a cabalist, I know you staid at Millamant's last night, after I went. Was there any mention made of my uncle or me ? Tell me ; if thou hadst but good nature equal to thy wit, Petulant, Tony Witwoud, who is now thy competitor in fame, would shew as dim by thee as a dead whiting's eye by a pearl of Orient ; he would no more be seen by thee, than Mercury is by the sun : Come, I'm sure thou wo't tell me.
PET. : If I do, will you grant me common sense then, for the future ?
MIRA. : Faith I'll do what I can for thee, and I'll pray that Heaven may grant it thee in the meantime.
PET. : Well, harkee.
FAIN. : Petulant and you both will find Mirabell as warm a rival as a lover.
WIT. : Pshaw, pshaw, that she laughs at Petulant is plain. And for my part—but that it is almost a fashion to admire her, I should—harkee—to tell you a secret, but let it go no further—between friends, I shall never break my heart for her.
FAIN. : How !
WIT. : She's handsome ; but she's a sort of an uncertain woman.

FAIN. : I thought you had died for her.

WIT. : Umh—no——

FAIN. : She has wit.

WIT. : 'Tis what she will hardly allow anybody else—Now, demme, I should hate that, if she were as handsome as Cleopatra. Mirabell is not so sure of her as he thinks for.

FAIN. : Why do you think so?

WIT. : We staid pretty late there last night; and heard something of an uncle to Mirabell, who is lately come to town,—and is between him and the best part of his estate; Mirabell and he are at some distance, as my Lady Wishfort has been told; and you know she hates Mirabell, worse than a Quaker hates a parrot, or than a fishmonger hates a hard frost. Whether this uncle has seen Mrs. Millamant or not, I cannot say; but there were items of such a treaty being in embrio; and if it should come to life, poor Mirabell would be in some sort unfortunately fobbed i'faith.

FAIN. : 'Tis impossible Millamant should harken to it.

WIT. : Faith, my dear, I can't tell; she's a woman and a kind of a humorist.

MIRA. : And this is the sum of what you could collect last night.

PET. : The quintessence. Maybe Witwoud knows more, he stayed longer.—Besides they never mind him; they say anything before him.

MIRA. : I thought you had been the greatest favourite.

PET. : Ay, *tête à tête*; but not in publick, because I make remarks.

MIRA. : You do?

PET. : Ay, ay, pox I'm malicious, man. Now he's soft, you know, they are not in awe of him—the fellow's well bred, he's what you call a—what-d'ye-call-'em. A fine gentleman, but he's silly withal.

MIRA. : I thank you, I know as much as my curiosity requires. Fainall, are you for the Mall?

FAIN. : Ay, I'll take a turn before dinner.

WIT. : Ay, we'll all walk in the Park, the ladies talked of being there.

MIRA. : I thought you were obliged to watch for your brother Sir Wilfull's arrival.

WIT. : No, no, he comes to his aunt's, my Lady Wishfort; pox on him, I shall be troubled with him too; what shall I do with the fool?

PET. : Beg him for his estate; that I may beg you afterwards; and so have but one trouble with you both.

WIT. : O rare Petulant; thou art as quick as fire in a frosty morning; thou shalt to the Mall with us; and we'll be very severe.

PET. : Enough, I'm in a humour to be severe.

MIRA. : Are you? Pray then walk by yourselves,—let not us be accessary to your putting the ladies out of countenance, with your senseless ribaldry; which you roar out aloud as often as they pass by you; and when you have made a handsome woman blush, then you think you have been severe.

PET. : What, what? Then let 'em either shew their innocence by not understanding what they hear, or else shew their discretion by not hearing what they would not be thought to understand.

MIRA. : But hast not thou then sense enough to know that thou ought'st to be most ashamed of thyself, when thou hast put another out of countenance?

PET. : Not I, by this hand—I always take blushing either for a sign of guilt, or ill breeding.

MIRA. : I confess you ought to think so. You are in the right, that you may plead the error of your judgment in defence of your practice.

Where modesty's ill manners, 'tis but fit
That impudence and malice pass for wit.

ACT II

St. James's Park.

MRS. FAINALL *and* MRS. MARWOOD.

MRS. FAIN. : Ay, ay, dear Marwood, if we will be happy, we must find the means in ourselves, and among ourselves. Men are ever in extreams ; either doating, or averse. While they are lovers, if they have fire and sense, their jealousies are insupportable : and when they cease to love (we ought to think at least) they loath ; they look upon us with horror and distaste ; they meet us like the ghosts of what we were, and as from such, fly from us.

MRS. MAR. : True, 'tis an unhappy circumstance of life, that love should ever die before us ; and that the man so often should outlive the lover. But say what you will, 'tis better to be left, than never to have been loved. To pass our youth in dull indifference, to refuse the sweets of life because they once must leave us, is as preposterous as to wish to have been born old, because we one day must be old. For my part, my youth may wear and waste, but it shall never rust in my possession.

MRS. FAIN. : Then it seems you dissemble an aversion to mankind, only in compliance to my mother's humour.

MRS. MAR. : Certainly. To be free ; I have no taste of those insipid dry discourses, with which our sex of force must entertain themselves, apart from men. We may affect endearments to each other, profess eternal friendships, and seem to dote like lovers ; but 'tis not in our natures long to persevere. Love will resume his empire in our breasts, and every heart, or soon or late, receive and readmit him as its lawful tyrant.

MRS. FAIN. : Bless me, how have I been deceived ! Why you profess a libertine.

MRS. MAR. You see my friendship by my freedom. Come, be as sincere, acknowledge that your sentiments agree with mine.

MRS. FAIN. : Never.

MRS. MAR. : You hate mankind ?

MRS. FAIN. : Heartily, inveterately.

MRS. MAR. : Your husband ?

MRS. FAIN. : Most transcendently ; ay, though I say it, meritoriously.

MRS. MAR. : Give me your hand upon it.

MRS. FAIN. : There.

MRS. MAR. : I join with you ; what I have said has been to try you.

MRS. FAIN. : Is it possible ? Dost thou hate those vipers men ?

MRS. MAR. : I have done hating 'em, and am now come to despise 'em ; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em.

MRS. FAIN. : There spoke the spirit of an Amazon, a Penthesilea.

MRS. MAR. : And yet I am thinking sometimes to carry my aversion further.

MRS. FAIN. : How ?

MRS. MAR. : Faith by marrying ; if I could but find one that loved me very well, and would be thoroughly sensible of ill usage, I think I should do myself the violence of undergoing the ceremony.

MRS. FAIN. : You would not make him a cuckold ?

MRS. MAR. : No ; but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

MRS. FAIN. : Why had not you as good do it ?

MRS. MAR. : O if he should ever discover it, he would then know the worst, and be out of his pain ; but I would have him ever to continue upon the rack of fear and jealousie.

MRS FAIN. : Ingenious mischief ! Would thou wert married to Mirabell.

MRS. MAR. : Would I were.

MRS. FAIN. : You change colour.
MRS. MAR. : Because I hate him.
MRS. FAIN. : So do I ; but I can hear him named. But what reason have you to hate him in particular ?
MRS. MAR. : I never loved him ; he is, and always was, insufferably proud.
MRS. FAIN. : By the reason you give for your aversion, one would think it dissembled ; for you have laid a fault to his charge of which his enemies must acquit him.
MRS. MAR. : O then it seems you are one of his favourable enemies. Methinks you look a little pale, and now you flush again.
MRS. FAIN. : Do I ? I think I am a little sick o' the sudden.
MRS. MAR. : What ails you ?
MRS. FAIN. : My husband. Don't you see him ? He turned short upon me unawares, and has almost overcome me.

Enter FAINALL *and* MIRABELL.

MRS. MAR. : Ha, ha, ha ; he comes opportunely for you.
MRS. FAIN. : For you, for he has brought Mirabell with him.
FAIN. : My dear.
MRS. FAIN. : My soul.
FAIN. : You don't look well to-day, child.
MRS. FAIN. : D'ye think so ?
MIRA. : He is the only man that does, madam.
MRS. FAIN. : The only man that would tell me so at least ; and the only man from whom I could hear it without mortification.
FAIN. : O my dear, I am satisfied of your tenderness ; I know you cannot resent anything from me ; especially what is an effect of my concern.
MRS. FAIN. : Mr. Mirabell, my mother interrupted you in a pleasant relation last night : I would fain hear it out.
MIRA. : The persons concerned in that affair have yet a tolerable reputation.—I am afraid Mr. Fainall will be censorious.
MRS. FAIN. : He has a humour more prevailing than his curiosity, and will willingly dispence with the hearing of one scandalous story, to avoid giving an occasion to make another by being seen to walk with his wife. This way, Mr. Mirabell, and I dare promise you will oblige us both.

[*Exeunt* MRS. FAINALL *and* MIRABELL.

FAIN. : Excellent creature ! Well, sure if I should live to be rid of my wife, I should be a miserable man.
MRS. MAR. : Ay !
FAIN. : For having only that one hope, the accomplishment of it, of consequence must put an end to all my hope ; and what a wretch is he who must survive his hopes ! Nothing remains when that day comes, but to sit down and weep like Alexander when he wanted other worlds to conquer.
MRS. MAR. : Will you not follow 'em ?
FAIN. : Faith, I think not.
MRS. MAR. : Pray let us ; I have a reason.
FAIN. : You are not jealous ?
MRS. MAR. : Of whom ?
FAIN. : Of Mirabell.
MRS. MAR. : If I am, is it inconsistent with my love to you that I am tender of your honour ?
FAIN. : You would intimate then, as if there were a fellow-feeling between my wife and him.
MRS. MAR. : I think she does not hate him to that degree she would be thought.

FAIN. : But he, I fear, is too insensible.

MRS. MAR. : It may be you are deceived.

FAIN. : It may be so. I do not now begin to apprehend it.

MRS. MAR. : What ?

FAIN. : That I have been deceived, madam, and you are false.

MRS. MAR. : That I am false ! What mean you ?

FAIN. : To let you know I see through all your little arts—Come, you both love him; and both have equally dissembled your aversion. Your mutual jealousies of one another, have made you clash 'till you have both struck fire. I have seen the warm confession redening on your cheeks and sparkling from your eyes.

MRS. MAR. : You do me wrong.

FAIN. : I do not—'twas for my ease to oversee and wilfully neglect the gross advances made him by my wife ; that by permitting her to be engaged, I might continue unsuspected in my pleasures ; and take you oftener to my arms in full security. But could you think, because the nodding husband would not wake, that e'er the watchful lover slept ?

MRS. MAR. : And wherewithal can you reproach me ?

FAIN. : With infidelity, with loving another, with love of Mirabell.

MRS. MAR. : 'Tis false. I challenge you to shew an instance that can confirm your groundless accusation. I hate him.

FAIN. : And wherefore do you hate him ? He is insensible, and your resentment follows his neglect. An instance ! The injuries you have done him are a proof : your interposing in his love. What cause had you to make discoveries of his pretended passion ? To undeceive the credulous aunt, and be the officious obstacle of his match with Millamant ?

MRS. MAR. : My obligations to my lady urged me : I had professed a friendship to her ; and could not see her easie nature so abused by that dissembler.

FAIN. : What, was it conscience then ? Professed a friendship ! O the pious friendships of the female sex !

MRS. MAR. : More tender, more sincere, and more enduring, than all the vain and empty vows of men, whether professing love to us, or mutual faith to one another.

FAIN. : Ha, ha, ha ; you are my wife's friend too.

MRS. MAR. : Shame and ingratitude ! Do you reproach me ? You, you upbraid me ! Have I been false to her, through strict fidelity to you, and sacrificed my friendship to keep my love inviolate ? And have you the baseness to charge me with the guilt, unmindful of the merit ! To you it should be meritorious, that I have been vicious : And do you reflect that guilt upon me, which should lie buried in your own bosom ?

FAIN. : You misinterpret my reproof. I meant but to remind you of the slight account you once could make of strictest ties, when set in competition with your love to me.

MRS. MAR. : 'Tis false, you urged it with deliberate malice—'twas spoke in scorn, and I never will forgive it.

FAIN. : Your guilt, not your resentment, begets your rage. If yet you loved, you could forgive a jealousie : but you are stung to find you are discovered.

MRS. MAR. : It shall be all discovered. You too shall be discovered ; be sure you shall. I can but be exposed—if I do it myself I shall prevent your baseness.

FAIN. : Why, what will you do ?

MRS. MAR. : Disclose it to your wife ; own what has past between us.

FAIN. : Frenzy !

MRS. MAR. : By all my wrongs I'll do't—I'll publish to the world the in uries

you have done me, both in my fame and fortune : With both I trusted you, you bankrupt in honour, as indigent of wealth.

FAIN. : Your fame I have preserved. Your fortune has been bestowed as the prodigality of your love would have it, in pleasures which we both have shared. Yet, had not you been false, I had e'er this repaid it—'Tis true—had you permitted Mirabell with Millamant to have stollen their marriage, my lady had been incensed beyond all means of reconcilement : Millamant had forfeited the moiety of her fortune ; which then would have descended to my wife ;—and wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful prize of a rich widow's wealth, and squander it on love and you ?

MRS. MAR. : Deceit and frivolous pretence.

FAIN. : Death, am I not married ? What's pretence ? Am I not imprisoned, fettered ? Have I not a wife ? Nay, a wife that was a widow, a young widow, a handsome widow ; and would be again a widow, but that I have a heart of proof, and something of a constitution to bustle through the ways of wedlock and this world. Will you yet be reconciled to truth and me ?

MRS. MAR. : Impossible. Truth and you are inconsistent—I hate you, and shall for ever.

FAIN. : For loving you ?

MRS. MAR. : I loath the name of love after such usage ; and next to the guilt with which you would asperse me, I scorn you most. Farewell.

FAIN. : Nay, we must not part thus.

MRS. MAR. : Let me go.

FAIN. : Come, I'm sorry.

MRS. MAR. : I care not—let me go—break my hands, do—I'd leave 'em to get loose.

FAIN. : I would not hurt you for the world. Have I no other hold to keep you here ?

MRS. MAR. : Well, I have deserved it all.

FAIN. : You know I love you.

MRS. MAR. : Poor dissembling !—O that—Well, it is not yet——

FAIN. : What ? What is it not ? What is it not yet ? It is not yet too late——

MRS. MAR. : No, it is not yet too late—I have that comfort.

FAIN. : It is, to love another.

MRS. MAR. : But not to loath, detest, abhor mankind, myself and the whole treacherous world.

FAIN. : Nay, this is extravagance.—Come, I ask your pardon—no tears—I was to blame, I could not love you and be easie in my doubts—pray forbear—I believe you ; I'm convinced I've done you wrong ; and any way, every way will make amends ;—I'll hate my wife yet more, damn her, I'll part with her, rob her of all she's worth, and we'll retire somewhere, anywhere, to another world, I'll marry thee—be pacified.—'Sdeath they come, hide your face, your tears—you have a mask, wear it a moment. This way, this way, be persuaded. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MIRABELL *and* MRS. FAINALL.

MRS. FAIN. : They are here yet.

MIRA. : They are turning into the other walk.

MRS. FAIN. : While I only hated my husband, I could bear to see him ; but since I have despised him, he's too offensive.

MIRA. : O you should hate with prudence.

MRS. FAIN. : Yes, for I have loved with indiscretion.

MIRA. : You should have just so much disgust for your husband as may be sufficient to make you relish your lover.

MRS. FAIN. : You have been the cause that I have loved without bounds, and would you set limits to that aversion, of which you have been the occasion ? Why did you make me marry this man ?

MIRA. : Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous actions? To save that idol reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produced that consequence, of which you were apprehensive, where could you have fixed a father's name with credit, but on a husband ? I knew Fainall to be a man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing friend, a false and a designing lover ; yet one whose wit and outward fair behaviour have gained a reputation with the town, enough to make that woman stand excused, who has suffered herself to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrificed to the occasion ; a worse had not answered to the purpose. When you are weary of him, you know your remedy.

MRS. FAIN. : I ought to stand in some degree of credit with you, Mirabell.

MIRA. : In justice to you, I have made you privy to my whole design, and put it in your power to ruin or advance my fortune.

MRS. FAIN. : Whom have you instructed to represent your pretended uncle ?

MIRA. : Waitwell, my servant.

MRS. FAIN. : He is an humble servant to Foible my mother's woman, and may win her to your interest.

MIRA. : Care is taken for that—she is won and worn by this time. They were married this morning.

MRS. FAIN. : Who ?

MIRA. : Waitwell and Foible. I would not tempt my servant to betray me by trusting him too far. If your mother, in hopes to ruin me, should consent to marry my pretended uncle, he might, like Mosca in the " Fox," stand upon terms ; so I made him sure before-hand.

MRS. FAIN. : So, if my poor mother is caught in a contract, you will discover the imposture betimes ; and release her by producing a certificate of her gallant's former marriage.

MIRA. : Yes, upon condition that she consent to my marriage with her niece, and surrender the moiety of her fortune in her possession.

MRS. FAIN. : She talked last night of endeavouring at a match between Millamant and your uncle.

MIRA. : That was by Foible's direction, and my instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

MRS. FAIN. : Well, I have an opinion of your success ; for I believe my lady will do anything to get an husband ; and when she has this, which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to anything to get rid of him.

MIRA. : Yes, I think the good lady would marry anything that resembled a man, though 'twere no more than what a butler could pinch out of a napkin.

MRS. FAIN. : Female frailty ! We must all come to it, if we live to be old, and feel the craving of a false appetite when the true is decayed.

MIRA. : An old woman's appetite is depraved like that of a girl—'tis the green-sickness of a second childhood ; and like the faint offer of a latter spring, serves but to usher in the fall ; and withers in an affected bloom.

MRS. FAIN. : Here's your mistress.

Enter MRS. MILLAMANT, WITWOUD, *and* MINCING.

MIRA. : Here she comes i'faith full sail, with her fan spread and streamers out, and a shoal of fools for tenders—Ha, no, I cry her mercy.

MRS. FAIN. : I see but one poor empty sculler ; and he tows her woman after him.

MIRA. : You seem to be unattended, madam,—you used to have the *beaumond* throng after you ; and a flock of gay fine perukes hovering round you.

WIT. : Like moths about a candle—I had like to have lost my comparison for want of breath.

MILLA. : O I have denied myself airs to-day. I have walked as fast through the croud——

WIT. : As a favourite just disgraced ; and with as few followers.

MILLA. : Dear Mr. Witwoud, truce with your similitudes : for I am as sick of 'em——

WIT. : As a physician of a good air—I cannot help it, madam, though 'tis against myself.

MILLA. : Yet again ! Mincing, stand between me and his wit.

WIT. : Do, Mrs. Mincing, like a skreen before a great fire. I confess I do blaze to-day, I am too bright.

MRS. FAIN. : But, dear Millamant, why were you so long ?

MILLA. : Long ! Lord, have I not made violent haste ? I have asked every living thing I met for you : I have enquired after you, as after a new fashion.

WIT. : Madam, truce with your similitudes—No, you met her husband, and did not ask him for her.

MIRA. : By your leave, Witwoud, that were like enquiring after an old fashion, to ask a husband for his wife.

WIT. : Hum, a hit, a hit, a palpable hit, I confess it.

MRS. FAIN. : You were dressed before I came abroad.

MILLA. : Ay, that's true—O but then I had—Mincing, what had I ? Why was I so long ?

MINC. : O mem, your laship staid to peruse a pacquet of letters.

MILLA. : O ay, letters—I had letters—I am persecuted with letters—I hate letters—nobody knows how to write letters ; and yet one has 'em, one does not know why—they serve one to pin up one's hair.

WIT. : Is that the way ? Pray, madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters ? I find I must keep copies.

MILLA. : Only with those in verse, Mr. Witwoud. I never pin up my hair with prose. I think I tried once, Mincing.

MINC. : O mem, I shall never forget it.

MILLA. : Ay, poor Mincing tift and tift all the morning.

MINC. : 'Till I had the cramp in my fingers, I'll vow, mem. And all to no purpose. But when your laship pins it up with poetry, it sits so pleasant the next day as anything, and is so pure and so crips.

WIT. : Indeed, so crips ?

MINC. : You're such a critick, Mr. Witwoud.

MILLA. : Mirabell, did you take exceptions last night ? O ay, and went away—Now I think on't I'm angry—no, now I think on't I'm pleased—for I believe I gave you some pain.

MIRA. : Does that please you ?

MILLA. : Infinitely ; I love to give pain.

MIRA. : You would affect a cruelty which is not in your nature ; your true vanity is in the power of pleasing.

MILLA. : O I ask your pardon for that—one's cruelty is one's power, and when one parts with one's cruelty, one parts with one's power ; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

MIRA. : Ay, ay, suffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your power, to destroy your lover—and then how vain, how lost a thing you'll be ? Nay, 'tis true : you are no longer handsome when you've lost your lover ; your beauty dies

upon the instant : For beauty is the lover's gift ; 'tis he bestows your charms—your glass is all a cheat. The ugly and the old, whom the looking-glass mortifies, yet after commendation can be flattered by it, and discover beauties in it : for that reflects our praises, rather than your face.

MILLA. : O the vanity of these men ! Fainall, d'ye hear him ? If they did not commend us, we were not handsome ! Now you must know they could not commend one, if one was not handsome. Beauty the lover's gift—Lord, what is a lover, that it can give ? Why one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases ; and then if one pleases one makes more.

WIT. : Very pretty. Why you make no more of making of lovers, madam, than of making so many card-matches.

MILLA. : One no more owes one's beauty to a lover, than one's wit to an eccho : they can but reflect what we look and say ; vain empty things if we are silent or unseen, and want a being.

MIRA. : Yet, to those two vain empty things, you owe two the greatest pleasures of your life.

MILLA. : How so ?

MIRA. : To your lover you owe the pleasure of hearing yourselves praised ; and to an eccho the pleasure of hearing yourselves talk.

WIT. : But I know a lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an eccho fair play ; she has that everlasting rotation of tongue, that an eccho must wait 'till she dies, before it can catch her last words.

MILLA. : O fiction ; Fainall, let us leave these men.

MIRA. : Draw off, Witwoud. [*Aside to* MRS. FAINALL.

MRS. FAIN. : Immediately ; I have a word or two for Mr. Witwoud.

[*Exeunt* MRS. FAINALL *and* WITWOUD.

MIRA. : I would beg a little private audience too—you had the tyranny to deny me last night ; though you knew I came to impart a secret to you that concerned my love.

MILLA. : You saw I was engaged.

MIRA. : Unkind. You had the leisure to entertain a herd of fools ; things who visit you from their excessive idleness ; bestowing on your easiness that time, which is the incumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in such society ? It is impossible they should admire you, they are not capable : or if they were, it should be to you as a mortification ; for sure to please a fool is some degree of folly.

MILLA. : I please myself—besides, sometimes to converse with fools is for my health.

MIRA. : Your health ! Is there a worse disease than the conversation of fools ?

MILLA. : Yes, the vapours ; fools are physick for it, next to *assa-fœtida*.

MIRA. : You are not in a course of fools ?

MILLA. : Mirabell, if you persist in this offensive freedom, you'll displease me—I think I must resolve after all, not to have you—we shan't agree.

MIRA. : Not in our physick it may be.

MILLA. : And yet our distemper in all likelihood will be the same ; for we shall be sick of one another. I shan't endure to be reprimanded, nor instructed ; 'tis so dull to act always by advice, and so tedious to be told of one's faults—I can't bear it. Well, I won't have you, Mirabell—I'm resolved—I think—You may go—ha, ha, ha. What would you give, that you could help loving me ?

MIRA. : I would give something that you did not know, I could not help it.

MILLA. : Come, don't look grave then. Well, what do you say to me ?

MIRA. : I say that a man may as soon make a friend by his wit, or a fortune by his honesty, as win a woman with plain-dealing and sincerity.

MILLA. : Sententious Mirabell ! Prithee don't look with that violent and inflexible wise face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child in an old tapestry hanging.

MIRA. : You are merry, madam, but I would persuade you for a moment to be serious.

MILLA. : What, with that face ? No, if you keep your countenance, 'tis impossible I should hold mine. Well, after all, there is something very moving in a lovesick face. Ha, ha, ha—Well I won't laugh, don't be peevish—Heigho ! Now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a watch-light. Well, Mirabell, if ever you will win me woo me now—Nay, if you are so tedious, fare you well ; —I see they are walking away.

MIRA. : Can you not find in the variety of your disposition one moment——

MILLA. : To hear you tell me Foible's married, and your plot like to speed.—No.

MIRA. : But how you came to know it——

MILLA. : Without the help of the devil, you can't imagine ; unless she should tell me herself. Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to consider ; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me. [*Exit.*

MIRA. : I have something more—Gone—think of you ! To think of a whirlwind, though 'twere in a whirlwind, were a case of more steady contemplation ; a very tranquility of mind and mansion. A fellow that lives in a windmill, has not a more whimsical dwelling than the heart of a man that is lodged in a woman. There is no point of the compass to which they cannot turn, and by which they are not turned ; and by one as well as another ; for motion not method is their occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason, and yet persevere to play the fool by the force of instinct.—O here come my pair of turtles.—what, billing so sweetly ! Is not Valentine's Day over with you yet ?

Enter WAITWELL, *and* FOIBLE.

MIRA. : Sirrah, Waitwell, why sure you think you were married for your own recreation, and not for my conveniency.

WAIT. : Your pardon, sir. With submission, we have indeed been solacing in lawful delights ; but still with an eye to business, sir. I have instructed her as well as I could. If she can take your directions as readily as my instructions, sir, your affairs are in a prosperous way.

MIRA. : Give you joy, Mrs. Foible.

FOIB. : O-las, sir, I'm so ashamed—I'm afraid my lady has been in a thousand inquietudes for me. But I protest, sir, I made as much haste as I could.

WAIT. : That she did indeed, sir. It was my fault that she did not make more.

MIRA. : That I believe.

FOIB. : But I told my lady as you instructed me, sir. That I had a prospect of seeing Sir Rowland your uncle ; and that I would put her ladiship's picture in my pocket to shew him ; which I'll be sure to say has made him so enamoured of her beauty, that he burns with impatience to lye at her ladiship's feet and worship the original.

MIRA. : Excellent Foible ! Matrimony has made you eloquent in love.

WAIT. : I think she has profited, sir. I think so.

FOIB. : You have seen Madam Millamant, sir ?

MIRA. : Yes.

FOIB. : I told her, sir, because I did not know that you might find an opportunity ; she had so much company last night.

MIRA. : Your diligence will merit more—In the meantime—— [*Gives money.*

FOIB. : O dear sir, your humble servant.

WAIT. : Spouse.

MIRA. : Stand off, sir, not a penny.—Go on and prosper, Foible—the lease shall be made good and the farm stocked, if we succeed.

FOIB. : I don't question your generosity, sir : and you need not doubt of success. If you have no more commands, sir, I'll be gone ; I'm sure my lady is at her toilet, and can't dress 'till I come.—O dear, I'm sure that (*looking out*) was Mrs. Marwood that went by in a mask ; if she has seen me with you I'm sure she'll tell my lady. I'll make haste home and prevent her. Your servant, sir. B'w'y, Waitwell. [*Exit.*

WAIT. : Sir Rowland if you please. The jade's so pert upon her preferment she forgets herself.

MIRA. : Come, sir, will you endeavour to forget yourself—and transform into Sir Rowland.

WAIT. : Why, sir ; it will be impossible I should remember myself—married, knighted and attended all in one day ! 'Tis enough to make any man forget himself. The difficulty will be how to recover my acquaintance and familiarity with my former self ; and fall from my transformation to a reformation into Waitwell. Nay, I shan't be quite the same Waitwell neither—for now I remember me, I'm married, and can't be my own man again.

Ay there's my grief ; that's the sad change of life ;
To lose my title, and yet keep my wife.

ACT III

A Room in LADY WISHFORT'S *House.*

LADY WISHFORT *at her toilet,* PEG *waiting.*

LADY : Merciful, no news of Foible yet ?

PEG : No, madam.

LADY : I have no more patience—if I have not fretted myself 'till I am pale again, there's no veracity in me. Fetch me the red—the red, do you hear, sweetheart ? An errant ash colour, as I'm a person. Look you how this wench stirs ! Why dost thou not fetch me a little red ? Didst thou not hear me, mopus ?

PEG : The red ratafia does your ladyship mean, or the cherry-brandy ?

LADY : Ratafia, fool. No, fool. Not the ratafia, fool—grant me patience ! I mean the Spanish paper, idiot, complexion darling. Paint, paint, paint, dost thou understand that, changeling, dangling thy hands like bobbins before thee ? Why dost thou not stir, puppet ? thou wooden thing upon wires.

PEG : Lord, madam, your ladyship is so impatient—I cannot come at the paint, madam, Mrs. Foible has locked it up, and carried the key with her.

LADY : A pox take you both—fetch me the cherry-brandy then. [*Exit* PEG. I'm as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs. Qualmsick the curate's wife, that's always breeding—Wench, come, come wench, what art thou doing, sipping ? tasting ? Save thee, dost thou not know the bottle ?

Enter PEG *with a bottle and china cup.*

PEG : Madam, I was looking for a cup.

LADY : A cup, save thee, and what a cup hast thou brought ! Dost thou take me for a fairy, to drink out of an acorn ? Why didst thou not bring thy thimble ? Hast thou ne'er a brass thimble clinking in thy pocket with a bit of nutmeg ? I warrant thee. Come, fill, fill.—So—again. See who that is.—(*One knocks.*) Set down the bottle first. Here, here, under the table—What,

wouldst thou go with the bottle in thy hand like a tapster. As I'm a person, this wench has lived in an inn upon the road, before she came to me, like Maritornes the Asturian in *Don Quixote*. No Foible yet?

PEG : No, madam, Mrs. Marwood.

LADY : O Marwood, let her come in. Come in, good Marwood.

Enter MRS. MARWOOD.

MRS. MAR. : I'm surprised to find your ladiship in *dishabillé* at this time of day.

LADY : Foible's a lost thing ; has been abroad since morning, and never heard of since.

MRS. MAR. : I saw her but now, as I came masked through the Park, in conference with Mirabell.

LADY : With Mirabell ! You call my blood into my face, with mentioning that traitor. She durst not have the confidence. I sent her to negotiate an affair, in which if I'm detected I'm undone. If that wheadling villain has wrought upon Foible to detect me, I'm ruined. Oh my dear friend, I'm a wretch of wretches if I'm detected.

MRS. MAR. : O madam, you cannot suspect Mrs. Foible's integrity.

LADY : O, he carries poison in his tongue that would corrupt integrity itself. If she has given him an opportunity, she has as good as put her integrity into his hands. Ah, dear Marwood, what's integrity to an opportunity ?—Hark ! I hear her.—Dear friend, retire into my closet, that I may examine her with more freedom—You'll pardon me, dear friend, I can make bold with you—There are books over the chimney—Quarles and Pryn, and the *Short View of the Stage*, with Bunyan's works to entertain you.—Go, you thing, and send her in. [*To* PEG.

Exeunt MRS. MARWOOD *and* PEG.

Enter FOIBLE.

LADY : O Foible, where hast thou been ? what hast thou been doing ?

FOIB. : Madam, I have seen the party.

LADY. : But what hast thou done ?

FOIB. : Nay, 'tis your ladiship has done, and are to do ; I have only promised. But a man so enamoured—so transported. Well, if worshipping of pictures be a sin—poor Sir Rowland, I say.

LADY : The miniature has been counted like—But hast thou not betrayed me, Foible ? Hast thou not detected me to that faithless Mirabell ?—What hadst thou to do with him in the Park ? Answer me, has he got nothing out of thee ?

FOIB. : So, the devil has been beforehand with me, what shall I say ?—Alas, madam, could I help it, if I met that confident thing ? Was I in fault ? If you had heard how he used me, and all upon your ladiship's account, I'm sure you would not suspect my fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worst I could have born : but he had a fling at your ladyship too ; and then I could not hold : but i'faith I gave him his own.

LADY : Me ? What did the filthy fellow say ?

FOIB. : O madam ; 'tis a shame to say what he said—with his taunts and his fleers, tossing up his nose. Humh (says he), what you are a hatching some plot (says he), you are so early abroad, or catering (says he), ferreting for some disbanded officer, I warrant—half pay is but thin subsistance (says he)—Well, what pension does your lady propose ? Let me see (says he), what she must come down pretty deep now, she's superannuated (says he) and——

LADY : Ods my life, I'll have him, I'll have him murdered. I'll have him poisoned. Where does he eat ? I'll marry a drawer to have him poisoned in his wine. I'll send for Robin from Lockets—immediately.

FOIB. : Poison him ? Poisoning's too good for him. Starve him, madam, starve him ; marry Sir Rowland, and get him disinherited. O you would bless yourself, to hear what he said.

LADY : A villain, superannuated !

FOIB. : Humh (says he), I hear you are laying designs against me too (says he), and Mrs. Millamant is to marry my uncle (he does not suspect a word of your ladiship) ; but (says he) I'll fit you for that, I warrant you (says he), I'll hamper you for that (says he), you and your old frippery too (says he), I'll handle you——

LADY : Audacious villain ! handle me, would he durst—Frippery ? old frippery ! Was there ever such a foul-mouthed fellow? I'll be married to-morrow, I'll be contracted to-night.

FOIB. : The sooner the better, madam.

LADY : Will Sir Rowland be here, say'st thou ? when, Foible ?

FOIB. : Incontinently, madam. No new sheriff's wife expects the return of her husband after knighthood, with that impatience in which Sir Rowland burns for the dear hour of kissing your ladiship's hand after dinner.

LADY : Frippery ! superannuated frippery ! I'll frippery the villain ; I'll reduce him to frippery and rags : a tatterdemallion—I hope to see him hung with tatters, like a Long-Lane pent-house, or a gibbet-thief. A slander-mouthed railer : I warrant the spendthrift prodigal's in debt as much as the million lottery, or the whole court upon a birthday. I'll spoil his credit with his tailor. Yes, he shall have my niece with her fortune, he shall.

FOIB. : He ! I hope to see him lodge in Ludgate first, and angle into Black-Fryars for brass farthings, with an old mitten.

LADY : Ay, dear Foible ; thank thee for that, dear Foible. He has put me out of all patience. I shall never recompose my features to receive Sir Rowland with any oeconomy of face. This wretch had fretted me that I am absolutely decayed. Look, Foible.

FOIB. : Your ladiship has frowned a little too rashly, indeed, madam. There are some cracks discernible in the white vernish.

LADY : Let me see the glass—Cracks, say'st thou ? Why, I am arrantly fleaed—I look like an old peeled wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes ; or I shall never keep up to my picture.

FOIB. : I warrant you, madam ; a little art once made your picture like you ; and now a little of the same art must make you like your picture. Your picture must sit for you, madam.

LADY : But art thou sure Sir Rowland will not fail to come ? Or will a not fail when he does come ? Will he be importunate, Foible, and push ? For if he should not be importunate—I shall never break decorums—I shall die with confusion, if I am forced to advance—Oh, no, I can never advance—I shall swoon if he should expect advances. No, I hope Sir Rowland is better bred, than to put a lady to the necessity of breaking her forms. I won't be too coy neither.—I won't give him despair—but a little disdain is not amiss ; a little scorn is alluring.

FOIB. : A little scorn becomes your ladiship.

LADY : Yes, but tenderness becomes me best—a sort of a dyingness—You see that picture has a sort of a—Ha, Foible ? A swimmingness in the eyes—Yes, I'll look so—my niece affects it ; but she wants features. Is Sir Rowland handsome ? Let my toilet be removed—I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handsome ? Don't answer me. I won't know : I'll be surprized. I'll be taken by surprize.

FOIB. : By storm, madam. Sir Rowland's a brisk man.

LADY : Is he ! O then he'll importune, if he's a brisk man. I shall save decorums if Sir Rowland importunes. I have a mortal terror at the apprehension of offending against decorums. O I'm glad he's a brisk man. Let my things be removed, good Foible. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. FAINALL.

MRS. FAIN. : O Foible, I have been in a fright, lest I should come too late. That devil, Marwood, saw you in the Park with Mirabell, and I'm afraid will discover it to my lady.

FOIB. : Discover what, madam ?

MRS. FAIN. : Nay, nay, put not on that strange face. I am privy to the whole design, and know that Waitwell, to whom thou wert this morning married, is to personate Mirabell's uncle, and as such, winning my lady, to involve her in those difficulties from which Mirabell only must release her, by his making his conditions to have my cousin and her fortune left to her own disposal.

FOIB. : O dear madam, I beg your pardon. It was not my confidence in your ladiship that was deficient ; but I thought the former good correspondence between your ladiship and Mr. Mirabell, might have hindered his communicating this secret.

MRS. FAIN : Dear Foible, forget that.

FOIB. : O dear madam, Mr. Mirabell is such a sweet winning gentleman—But your ladiship is the pattern of generosity.—Sweet lady, to be so good ! Mr. Mirabell cannot chuse but be grateful. I find your ladiship has his heart still. Now, madam, I can safely tell your ladiship our success, Mrs. Marwood had told my lady ; but I warrant I managed myself. I turned it all for the better. I told my lady that Mr. Mirabell railed at her. I laid horrid things to his charge, I'll vow ; and my lady is so incensed, that she'll be contracted to Sir Rowland to-night, she says ;—I warrant I worked her up, that he may have her for asking for, as they say of a Welsh maiden-head.

MRS. FAIN. : O rare Foible !

FOIB. : Madam, I beg your ladiship to acquaint Mr. Mirabell of his success. I would be seen as little as possible to speak to him—besides, I believe Madam Marwood watches me.—She has a month's mind ; but I know Mr. Mirabell can't abide her.—(*Calls.*) John—remove my lady's toilet. Madam, your servant. My lady is so impatient, I fear she'll come for me, if I stay.

MRS. FAIN. : I'll go with you up the back stairs, lest I should meet her.

[*Exeunt.*

MRS. MARWOOD *alone.*

MRS. MAR. : Indeed, Mrs. Engine, is it thus with you ? Are you become a go-between of this importance ? Yes, I shall watch you. Why this wench is the *pass-par-toute*, a very master-key to everybody's strong box. My friend Fainall, have you carried it so swimmingly ? I thought there was something in it ; but it seems it's over with you. Your loathing is not from a want of appetite then, but from a surfeit. Else you could never be so cool to fall from a principal to be an assistant ; to procure for him ! A pattern of generosity that I confess. Well, Mr. Fainall, you have met with your match.—O man, man ! Woman, woman ! The devil's an ass : if I were a painter, I would draw him like an idiot, a driveler with a bib and bells. Man should have his head and horns, and woman the rest of him. Poor simple fiend ! Madam Marwood has a month's mind, but he can't abide her—'Twere better for him you had not been his confessor in that affair ; without you could have kept his counsel closer. I shall not prove another pattern of generosity—he has not obliged me to that with those excesses of himself ; and now I'll

have none of him. Here comes the good lady, panting ripe ; with a heart full of hope, and a head full of care, like any chymist upon the day of projection.

Enter LADY WISHFORT.

LADY : O dear Marwood, what shall I say for this rude forgetfulness—but my dear friend is all goodness.

MRS. MAR. : No apologies, dear madam. I have been very well entertained.

LADY : As I'm a person I am in a very chaos to think I should so forget myself—but I have such an olio of affairs really I know not what to do.—(*Calls*)—Foible—I expect my nephew Sir Wilfull every moment too :—Why, Foible—He means to travel for improvement.

MRS. MAR. : Methinks Sir Wilfull should rather think of marrying than travelling at his years. I hear he is turned of forty.

LADY : O he's in less danger of being spoiled by his travels—I am against my nephew's marrying too young. It will be time enough when he comes back, and has acquired discretion to chuse for himself.

MRS. MAR. : Methinks Mrs. Millamant and he would make a very fit match. He may travel afterwards. 'Tis a thing very usual with young gentlemen.

LADY : I promise you I have thought on't—and since 'tis your judgment, I'll think on't again. I assure you I will ; I value your judgment extreamly. On my word I'll propose it.

Enter FOIBLE.

LADY : Come, come, Foible—I had forgot my nephew will be here before dinner—I must make haste.

FOIB. : Mr. Witwoud and Mr. Petulant are come to dine with your ladiship.

LADY : O dear, I can't appear 'till I am dressed. Dear Marwood, shall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain 'em. I'll make all imaginable haste. Dear friend, excuse me. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. MILLAMANT *and* MINCING.

MILLA. : Sure never anything was so unbred as that odious man.—Marwood, your servant.

MRS. MAR. : You have a colour, what's the matter ?

MILLA. : That horrid fellow Petulant has provoked me into a flame—I have broke my fan—Mincing, lend me yours ;—Is not all the powder out of my hair ?

MRS. MAR. : No. What has he done ?

MILLA. : Nay, he has done nothing ; he has only talked—Nay, he has said nothing neither ; but he had contradicted everything that has been said. For my part, I thought Witwoud and he would have quarrelled.

MINC. : I vow, mem, I thought once they would have fitt.

MILLA. : Well, 'tis a lamentable thing I swear, that one has not the liberty of chusing one's acquaintance as one does one's cloaths.

MRS. MAR. : If we had that liberty, we should be as weary of one set of acquaintance, though never so good, as we are of one suit, though never so fine. A fool and a doily stuff would now and then find days of grace, and be worn for variety.

MILLA. : I could consent to wear 'em, if they would wear alike ; but fools never wear out—they are such *drap-de-berry* things ! Without one could give 'em to one's chambermaid after a day or two.

MRS. MAR. : 'Twere better so indeed. Or what think you of the play-house ? A fine gay glosly fool should be given there, like a new masking habit, after the masquerade is over, and we have done with the disguise. For a fool's visit is always a disguise ; and never admitted by a woman of wit, but to blind her affair with a lover of sense. If you would but appear barefaced now, and own Mirabell ; you might as easily put off Petulant and Witwoud, as your hood and scarf. And indeed 'tis time, for the town has found it : the secret is grown too big for the pretence : 'tis like Mrs. Primly's great belly ; she may lace it down before, but it burnishes on her hips. Indeed, Millamant, you can no more conceal it, than my Lady Strammel can her face, that goodly face, which in defiance of her Rhenish-wine tea, will not be comprehended in a mask.

MILLA. : I'll take my death, Marwood, you are more censorious than a decayed beauty, or a discarded toast ; Mincing, tell the men they may come up. My aunt is not dressing here ; their folly is less provoking than your malice.

[*Exit* MINCING.

The town has found it. What has it found ? That Mirabell loves me is no more a secret, than it is a secret that you discovered it to my aunt, or than the reason why you discovered it is a secret.

MRS. MAR. : You are nettled.

MILLA. : You're mistaken. Ridiculous !

MRS. MAR. : Indeed, my dear, you'll tear another fan, if you don't mitigate those violent airs.

MILLA. : O silly ! Ha, ha, ha. I could laugh immoderately. Poor Mirabell ! His constancy to me has quite destroyed his complaisance for all the world beside. I swear, I never enjoined it him, to be so coy—If I had the vanity to think he would obey me, I would command him to shew more gallantry—'tis hardly well bred to be so particular on one hand, and so insensible on the other. But I despair to prevail, and so let him follow his own way. Ha, ha, ha. Pardon me, dear creature, I must laugh, ha, ha, ha ; though I grant you 'tis a little barbarous, ha, ha, ha.

MRS. MAR. : What pity 'tis, so much fine raillery, and delivered with so significant gesture, should be so unhappily directed to miscarry.

MILLA. : Hæ ! Dear creature, I ask your pardon—I swear I did not mind you.

MRS. MAR. : Mr. Mirabell and you both may think it a thing impossible, when I shall tell him by telling you——

MILLA. : O dear, what ? for it is the same thing, if I hear it—ha, ha, ha.

MRS. MAR. : That I detest him, hate him, madam.

MILLA. : O madam, why so do I—and yet the creature loves me, ha, ha, ha. How can one forbear laughing to think of it—I am a Sybil if I am not amazed to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death, I think you are handsomer—and within a year or two as young.—If you could but stay for me, I should overtake you—but that cannot be—Well, that thought makes me melancholick—now I'll be sad.

MRS. MAR. : Your merry note may be changed sooner than you think.

MILLA. : D'ye say so ? Then I'm resolved I'll have a song to keep up my spirits.

Enter MINCING.

MINC. : The gentlemen stay but to comb, madam ; and will wait on you.

MILLA. : Desire Mrs. —— that is in the next room to sing the song I would have learnt yesterday. You shall hear it, madam—Not that there's any great matter in it—but 'tis agreeable to my humour.

SONG

Set by Mr. John Eccles.

I

Love's but the frailty of the mind,
When 'tis not with ambition joined ;
A sickly flame, which if not fed expires ;
And feeding, wastes in self-consuming fires.

II

'Tis not to wound a wanton boy
Or am'rous youth, that gives the joy ;
But 'tis the glory to have pierced a swain,
For whom inferior beauties sighed in vain.

III

Then I alone the conquest prize,
When I insult a rival's eyes :
If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see
That heart which others bleed for, bleed for me.

Enter PETULENT *and* WITWOUD.

MILLA. : Is your animosity composed, gentlemen ?

WIT. : Raillery, raillery, madam, we have no animosity—we hit off a little wit now and then, but no animosity—The falling out of wits is like the falling out of lovers—We agree in the main, like treble and base. Ha, Petulant !

PET. : Ay, in the main—but when I have a humour to contradict——

WIT. : Ay, when he has a humour to contradict, then I contradict too. What, I know my cue. Then we contradict one another like two battledores ; for contradictions beget one another like Jews.

PET. : If he says black's black—if I have a humour to say 'tis blue—let that pass—all's one for that. If I have a humour to prove it, it must be granted.

WIT. : Not positively must—but it may—it may.

PET. : Yes, it positively must, upon proof positive.

WIT. : Ay, upon proof positive it must ; but upon proof presumptive it only may. That's a logical distinction now, madam.

MRS. MAR. : I perceive your debates are of importance, and very learnedly handled.

PET. : Importance is one thing, and learning's another ; but a debate's a debate, that I assert.

WIT. : Petulant's an enemy to learning ; he relies altogether on his parts.

PET. : No, I'm no enemy to learning ; it hurts not me.

MRS. MAR. : That's a sign indeed it's no enemy to you.

PET. : No, no, it's no enemy to anybody, but them that have it.

MILLA. : Well, an illiterate man's my aversion, I wonder at the impudence of an illiterate man, to offer to make love.

WIT. : That I confess I wonder at too.

MILLA. : Ah ! to marry an ignorant ! that can hardly read or write.

PET. : Why should a man be any further from being married though he can't read, than he is from being hanged ? The ordinary's paid for setting the psalm, and the parish-priest for reading the ceremony. And for the rest which is to follow in both cases, a man may do it without book—so all's one for that.

MILLA. : D'ye hear the creature ? Lord, here's company, I'll be gone.

[*Exit.*

Enter SIR WILFULL WITWOUD *in a riding dress, and a* FOOTMAN.

WIT. : In the name of Bartlemew and his fair, what have we here ?

MRS. MAR. : 'Tis your brother, I fancy. Don't you know him ?

WIT. : Not I—Yes, I think it is he—I've almost forgot him ; I have not seen him since the Revolution.

FOOT. : Sir, my lady's dressing. Here's company ; if you please to walk in, in the meantime.

SIR WIL. : Dressing ! What, it's but morning here I warrant with you in London ; we should count it towards afternoon in our parts, down in Shropshire.—Why then belike my aunt han't dined yet—ha, friend ?

FOOT. : Your aunt, sir ?

SIR WIL. : My aunt, sir, yes, my aunt, sir, and your lady, sir ; your lady is my aunt, sir—Why, what do'st thou not know me, friend ? Why then send somebody hither that does. How long hast thou lived with thy lady, fellow, ha ?

FOOT. : A week, sir ; longer than anybody in the house, except my lady's woman.

SIR WIL. : Why then belike thou dost not know thy lady, if thou see'st her, ha, friend ?

FOOT. : Why truly, sir, I cannot safely swear to her face in a morning, before she is dressed. 'Tis like I may give a shrewd guess at her by this time.

SIR WIL. : Well, prithee try what thou canst do ; if thou canst not guess, enquire her out, do'st hear, fellow ? And tell her, her nephew, Sir Wilfull Witwoud, is in the house.

FOOT. : I shall, sir.

SIR WIL. : Hold ye, hear me friend ; a word with you in your ear, prithee who are these gallants ?

FOOT. : Really, sir, I can't tell ; here come so many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all. [*Exit.*

SIR WIL. : Oons this fellow knows less than a starling ; I don't think a' knows his own name.

MRS. MAR. : Mr. Witwoud, your brother is not behind-hand in forgetfulness—I fancy he has forgot you too.

WIT. : I hope so—the devil take him that remembers first, I say.

SIR WIL. : Save you, gentlemen and lady.

MRS. MAR. : For shame, Mr. Witwoud ; why won't you speak to him ?—And you, sir.

WIT. : Petulant, speak.

PET. : And you, sir.

SIR WIL. : No offence, I hope. [*Salutes* MARWOOD.

MRS. MAR. : No, sure, sir.

WIT. : This is a vile dog, I see that already. No offence ! Ha, ha, ha, to him ; to him, Petulant, smoke him.

PET. : It seems as if you had come a journey, sir ; hem, hem. [*Surveying him round.*

SIR WIL. : Very likely, sir, that it may seem so.

PET. : No offence, I hope, sir.

WIT. : Smoke the boots, the boots ; Petulant, the boots ; ha, ha, ha.

SIR WIL. : Maybe not, sir ; thereafter as 'tis meant, sir.

PET. : Sir, I presume upon the information of your boots.

SIR WIL. : Why, 'tis like you may, sir : if you are not satisfied with the information of my boots, sir, if you will step to the stable, you may enquire further of my horse, sir.

PET. : Your horse, sir ! Your horse is an ass, sir !

SIR WIL. : Do you speak by way of offence, sir ?

MRS. MAR. : The gentleman's merry, that's all, sir.—S'life, we shall have a quarrel betwixt an horse and an ass, before they find one another out. You must not take anything amiss from your friends, sir. You are among your friends here, though it may be you don't know it.—If I am not mistaken, you are Sir Wilfull Witwoud.

SIR WIL. : Right, lady ; I am Sir Wilfull Witwoud, so I write myself ; no offence to anybody, I hope ; and nephew to the Lady Wishfort of this mansion.

MRS. MAR. : Don't you know this gentleman, sir ?

SIR WIL. : Hum ! What, sure 'tis not—Yea, by'r lady, but 'tis—'Sheart, I know not whether 'tis or no—Yea, but 'tis, by the Rekin. Brother Antony ! What, Tony, i'faith ! What do'st thou not know me ? By'r Lady, nor I thee, thou art so becravated, and so beperriwiged—'Sheart, why do'st not speak ? Art thou o'erjoyed ?

WIT. : Odso, brother, is it you ? Your servant, brother.

SIR WIL. : Your servant ! Why yours, sir. Your servant again—'Sheart, and your friend and servant to that—And a—(*puff*) and a flap dragon for your service, sir : and a hare's foot, and a hare's scut for your service, sir : an you be so cold and so courtly ?

WIT. : No offence, I hope, brother.

SIR WIL. : 'Sheart, sir, but there is, and much offence.—A pox, is this your Inns o' Court breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders, and your betters ?

WIT. : Why, brother Wilfull of Salop, you may be as short as a Shrewsbury cake, if you please. But I tell you 'tis not modish to know relations in town. You think you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers slabber and kiss one another when they meet, like a call of serjeants—'Tis not the fashion here ; 'tis not indeed, dear brother.

SIR WIL. : The fashion's a fool ; and you're a fop, dear brother. 'Sheart, I've suspected this—By'r Lady I conjectured you were a fop, since you began to change the stile of your letters, and write in a scrap of paper gilt round the edges, no bigger than a subpæna. I might expect this when you left off Honoured Brother ; and hoping you are in good health, and so forth—to begin with a Rat me, knight, I'm so sick of a last night's debauch—O'ds heart, and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a whore and a bottle, and so conclude—You could write news before you were out of your time, when you lived with honest Pumple-Nose, the attorney of Furnival's Inn—You could intreat to be remembered then to your friends round the Rekin. We could have Gazettes then, and Dawks's Letter, and the Weekly Bill, 'till of late days.

PET. : 'Slife, Witwoud, were you ever an attorney's clerk ? Of the family of the Furnivals. Ha, ha, ha !

WIT. : Ay, ay, but that was but for a while. Not long, not long ; pshaw, I was not in my own power then. An orphan, and this fellow was my guardian ; ay, ay, I was glad to consent to that man to come to London. He had the disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound prentice to a felt-maker in Shrewsbury ; this fellow would have bound me to a maker of felts.

SIR WIL. : 'Sheart, and better than to be bound to a maker of fops ; where, I suppose, you have served your time ; and now you may set up for yourself.

MRS. MAR. : You intend to travel, sir, as I'm informed.

SIR WIL. : Belike I may, madam. I may chance to sail upon the salt seas, if my mind hold.

PET. : And the wind serve.

SIR WIL. : Serve or not serve, I shan't ask license of you, sir ; nor the weather-cock, your companion. I direct my discourse to the lady, sir. 'Tis like my aunt may have told you, madam—Yes, I have settled my concerns, I may say now, and am minded to see foreign parts. If an how that the peace holds, whereby that is taxes abate.

MRS. MAR. : I thought you had designed for France at all adventures.

SIR WIL. : I can't tell that ; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not. I am somewhat dainty in making a resolution,—because when I make it I keep it. I don't stand shill I, shall I, then ; if I say't, I'll do't : But I have thoughts to tarry a small matter in town, to learn somewhat of your lingo first, before I cross the seas. I'd gladly have a spice of your French as they say, whereby to hold discourse in foreign countries.

MRS. MAR. : Here's an academy in town for that use.

SIR WIL. : There is ? 'Tis like there may.

MRS. MAR. : No doubt you will return very much improved.

WIT. : Yes, refined like a Dutch skipper from a whale-fishing.

Enter LADY WISHFORT *and* FAINALL.

LADY : Nephew, you are welcome.

SIR WIL. : Aunt, your servant.

FAIN. : Sir Wilfull, your most faithful servant.

SIR WIL. : Cousin Fainall, give me your hand.

LADY : Cousin Witwoud, your servant ; Mr. Petulant, your servant—nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink anything after your journey, nephew, before you eat ? Dinner's almost ready.

SIR WIL. : I'm very well I thank you, aunt—however, I thank you for your courteous offer. 'Sheart, I was afraid you would have been in the fashion too, and have remembered to have forgot your relations. Here's your Cousin Tony, belike, I mayn't call him brother for fear of offence.

LADY : O he's a railler, nephew—my cousin's a wit ; and your great wits always rally their best friends to chuse. When you have been abroad, nephew, you'll understand raillery better.

[FAIN. *and* MRS. MARWOOD *talk apart.*

SIR WIL. : Why then let him hold his tongue in the meantime ; and rail when that day comes.

Enter MINCING.

MINC. : Mem, I come to acquaint your laship that dinner is impatient.

SIR WIL. : Impatient ? Why then belike it won't stay 'till I pull off my boots. Sweetheart, can you help me to a pair of slippers ?—My man's with his horses, I warrant.

LADY : Fie, fie, nephew, you would not pull off your boots here—go down into the hall—dinner shall stay for you.—My nephew's a little unbred, you'll pardon him, madam—Gentlemen, will you walk ? Marwood ?

MRS. MAR. : I'll follow you, madam,—before Sir Wilfull is ready.

[*Exeunt all except* MRS. MARWOOD *and* FAINALL.

FAIN. : Why then Foible's a bawd, an errant, rank match-making bawd. And I, it seems, am a husband, a rank-husband ; and my wife a very errant, rank-wife,—all in the way of the world. 'Sdeath, to be a cuckold by anticipation, a cuckold in embrio ? Sure I was born with budding antlers like a young satyr, or a citizen's child. 'Sdeath, to be outwitted, to be out-jilted—out-matrimonied—If I had kept my speed like a stag, 'twere somewhat—but to crawl after, with my horns like a snail, and be outstripped by my wife—'tis scurvy wedlock.

MRS. MAR. : Then shake it off, you have often wished for an opportunity to part ;—and now you have it. But first prevent their plot.—the half of Millamant's fortune is too considerable to be parted with, to a foe, to Mirabell.

FAIN. : Damn him, that had been mine, had you not made that fond discovery—that had been forfeited, had they been married. My wife had added lustre to my horns, by that encrease of fortune, I could have worn 'em tipt with gold, though my forehead had been furnished like a deputy-lieutenant's hall.

MRS. MAR. : They may prove a cap of maintenance to you still, if you can away with your wife. And she's no worse than when you had her—I dare swear she had given up her game, before she was married.

FAIN. : Hum ! That may be——

MRS. MAR. : You married her to keep you ; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected, why should you not keep her longer than you intended ?

FAIN. : The means, the means.

MRS. MAR. : Discover to my lady your wife's conduct ; threaten to part with her—my lady loves her, and will come to any composition to save her reputation. Take the opportunity of breaking it, just upon the discovery of this imposture. My lady will be enraged beyond bounds, and sacrifice niece, and fortune, and all at that conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm ; if she should flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

FAIN. : Faith, this has an appearance.

MRS. MAR. : I'm sorry I hinted to my lady to endeavour a match between Millamant and Sir Wilfull, that may be an obstacle.

FAIN. : O for that matter leave me to manage him ; I'll disable him for that, he will drink like a Dane ; after dinner, I'll set his hand in.

MRS. MAR. : Well, how do you stand affected towards your lady ?

FAIN. : Why faith I'm thinking of it.—Let me see—I am married already ; so that's over—My wife has plaid the jade with me—well, that's over too—I never loved her, or if I had, why that would have been over too by this time—Jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain ; so there's an end of jealousie. Weary of her, I am and shall be—No, there's no end of that ; no, no, that were too much to hope. Thus far concerning my repose. Now for my reputation—As to my own, I married not for it ; so that's out of the question—And as to my part in my wife's—why she had parted with hers before ; so bringing none to me, she can take none from me ; 'tis against all rule of play, that I should lose to one who has not wherewithal to stake.

MRS. MAR. : Besides, you forget, marriage is honourable.

FAIN. : Hum ! Faith and that's well thought on ; marriage is honourable, as you say ; and if so, wherefore should cuckoldom be a discredit, being derived from so honourable a root ?

MRS. MAR. : Nay, I know not ; if the root be honourable, why not the branches ?

FAIN. : So, so, why this point's clear.—Well, how do we proceed ?

MRS. MAR. : I will contrive a letter which shall be delivered to my lady at the time when that rascal who is to act Sir Rowland is with her. It shall come as from an unknown hand—for the less I appear to know of the truth, the better I can play the incendiary. Besides, I would not have Foible provoked if I could help it,—because you know she knows some passages—nay, I expect all will come out—but let the mine be sprung first, and then I care not if I am discovered.

FAIN. : If the worst comes to the worst, I'll turn my wife out to grass—I have

already a deed of settlement of the best part of her estate ; which I wheadled out of her ; and that you shall partake at least.

MRS. MAR. : I hope you are convinced that I hate Mirabell now : you'll be no more jealous ?

FAIN. : Jealous, no,—by this kiss—let husbands be jealous ; but let the lover still believe : or if he doubt, let it be only to endear his pleasure, and prepare the joy that follows, when he proves his mistress true. But let husbands' doubts convert to endless jealousie ; or if they have belief, let it corrupt to superstition, and blind credulity. I am single, and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the badge, but I'll disown the order. And since I take my leave of 'em, I care not if I leave 'em a common motto to their common crest.

All husbands must, or pain, or shame, endure ;
The wife too jealous are, fools too secure.

ACT IV

Same Scene.

LADY WISHFORT *and* FOIBLE.

LADY : Is Sir Rowland coming, say'st thou, Foible ? and are things in order ?

FOIB. : Yes, madam. I have put wax-lights in the sconces ; and placed the footmen in a row in the hall, in their best liveries, with the coachman and postilion to fill up the equipage.

LADY : Have you pullvilled the coachman and postilion, that they may not stink of the stable, when Sir Rowland comes by ?

FOIB. : Yes, madam.

LADY : And are the dancers and the music ready, that he may be entertained in all points with correspondence to his passion ?

FOIB. : All is ready, madam.

LADY : And—well—and how do I look, Foible ?

FOIB. : Most killing well, madam.

LADY. : Well, and how shall I receive him ? In what figure shall I give his heart the first impression ? There is a great deal in the first impression. Shall I sit ?—No, I won't sit—I'll walk—ay, I'll walk from the door upon his entrance ; and then turn full upon him—No, that will be too sudden. I'll lye—ay, I'll lye down—I'll receive him in my little dressing-room, there's a couch—yes, yes, I'll give the first impression on a couch—I won't lye neither, but loll and lean upon one elbow ; with one foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughtful way—yes—and then as soon as he appears, start, ay, start and be surprised, and rise to meet him in a pretty disorder—yes—O, nothing is more alluring than a levee from a couch in some confusion—it shews the foot to advantage, and furnishes with blushes, and re-composing airs beyond comparison. Hark ! There's a coach.

FOIB. : 'Tis he, madam.

LADY : O dear, has my nephew made his addresses to Millamant ? I ordered him.

FOIB. : Sir Wilfull is set in to drinking, madam, in the parlour.

LADY : Ods my life, I'll send him to her. Call her down, Foible ; bring her hither. I'll send him as I go—When they are together, then come to me, Foible, that I may not be too long alone with Sir Rowland. [*Exit.*

Enter MRS. MILLAMANT *and* MRS. FAINALL.

FOIB. : Madam, I stayed here, to tell your ladiship that Mr. Mirabell has waited this half-hour for an opportunity to talk with you. Though my lady's

orders were to leave you and Sir Wilfull together. Shall I tell Mr. Mirabell that you are at leisure?

MILLA. : No—What would the dear man have? I am thoughtful, and would amuse myself,—bid him come another time.

There never yet was woman made,
Nor shall, but to be cursed.

[*Repeating and walking about.*

That's hard!

MRS. FAIN. : You are very fond of Sir John Suckling to-day, Millamant, and the poets.

MILLA. : He? Ay, and filthy verses—so I am.

FOIB. : Sir Wilfull is coming, madam. Shall I send Mr. Mirabell away?

MILLA. : Ay, if you please, Foible, send him away,—or send him hither,—just as you will, dear Foible.—I think I'll see him—Shall I? Ay, let the wretch come. [*Exit* FOIBLE.

Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train. [*Repeating.*

Dear Fainall, entertain Sir Wilfull—thou hast philosophy to undergo a fool, thou art married and hast patience—I would confer with my own thoughts.

MRS. FAIN. : I am obliged to you, that you would make me your proxy in this affair; but I have business of my own.

Enter SIR WILFULL.

MRS. FAIN. : O Sir Wilfull; you are come at the critical instant. There's your mistress up to the ears in love and contemplation, pursue your point, now or never.

SIR WIL. : Yes; my aunt will have it so,—I would gladly have been encouraged with a bottle or two, because I'm somewhat wary at first, before I am acquainted—(*This while* MILLA. *walks about repeating to herself.*) But I hope, after a time, I shall break my mind—that is upon further acquaintance.—So for the present, cousin, I'll take my leave—if so be you'll be so kind to make my excuse, I'll return to my company——

MRS. FAIN. : O fie, Sir Wilfull! What, you must not be daunted.

SIR WIL. : Daunted, no, that's not it, it is not so much for that—for if so be that I set on't, I'll do't. But only for the present, 'tis sufficient 'till further acquaintance, that's all—your servant.

MRS. FAIN. : Nay, I'll swear you shall never lose so favourable an opportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together, and lock the door. [*Exit.*

SIR WIL. : Nay, nay, cousin,—I have forgot my gloves.—What d'ye do? 'Sheart, a' has locked the door indeed, I think—Nay, Cousin Fainall. open the door—Pshaw, what a vixon trick is this?—Nay, now a' has seen me too—cousin, I made bold to pass through as it were—I think this door's inchanted——

MILLA. (*repeating*) :

I prithee spare me, gentle boy,
Press me no more for that slight toy.

SIR WIL. : Anan? Cousin, your servant.

MILLA. : That foolish trifle of a heart——
Sir Wilfull!

SIR WIL. : Yes—your servant. No offence, I hope, cousin.

MILLA. (*repeating*) :

I swear it will not do its part,
Though thou dost thine, employ'st thy power and art.

Natural, easie Suckling!

SIR WIL. : Anan ? Suckling ? No such suckling neither, cousin, nor stripling : I thank Heaven, I'm no minor.

MILLA. : Ah, rustick, ruder than Gothick.

SIR WIL. : Well, well, I shall understand your lingo one of these days, cousin, in the meanwhile I must answer in plain English.

MILLA. : Have you any business with me, Sir Wilfull ?

SIR WIL. : Not at present, cousin.—Yes, I made bold to see, to come and know if that how you were disposed to fetch a walk this evening, if so be that I might not be troublesome, I would have sought a walk with you.

MILLA. : A walk ? What then ?

SIR WIL. : Nay, nothing—only for the walk's sake, that's all——

MILLA. : I nauseate walking ; 'tis a country diversion, I loath the country and everything that relates to it.

SIR WIL. : Indeed ! Hah ! Look ye, look ye, you do ? Nay, 'tis like you may—Here are choice of pastimes here in town, as plays and the like, that must be confessed indeed——

MILLA. : *Ah l'etourdie !* I hate the town too.

SIR WIL. : Dear heart, that's much—Hah ! that you should hate 'em both ! Hah ! 'tis like you may ; there are some can't relish the town, and others can't away with the country,—'tis like you may be one of those, cousin.

MILLA. : Ha, ha, ha. Yes, 'tis like I may.—You have nothing further to say to me ?

SIR WIL. : Not at present, cousin.—'Tis like when I have an opportunity to be more private, I may break my mind in some measure—I conjecture you partly guess—However, that's as time shall try,—but spare to speak and spare to speed, as they say.

MILLA. : If it is of no great importance, Sir Wilfull, you will oblige me to leave me : I have just now a little business——

SIR WIL. : Enough, enough, cousin : yes, yes, all a case—when you're disposed, when you're disposed. Now's as well as another time ; and another time as well as now. All's one for that.—Yes, yes, if your concerns call you, there's no haste ; it will keep cold as they say—Cousin, your servant.—I think this door's locked.

MILLA. : You may go this way, sir.

SIR WIL. : Your servant, then with your leave I'll return to my company.

MILLA. : Ay, ay ; ha, ha, ha.

Like Phœbus sung the no less am'rous boy.

Enter MIRABELL.

MIRA. : Like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy.
Do you lock yourself up from me, to make my search more curious ? Or is this pretty artifice contrived, to signifie that here the chace must end, and my pursuit be crowned, for you can fly no further ?

MILLA. : Vanity ! No—I'll fly and be followed to the last moment, though I am upon the very verge of matrimony, I expect you should sollicit me as much as if I were wavering at the grate of a monastery, with one foot over the threshold. I'll be sollicited to the very last, nay and afterwards.

MIRA. : What, after the last ?

MILLA. : O, I should think I was poor and had nothing to bestow, if I were reduced to an inglorious ease, and freed from the agreeable fatigues of sollicitation.

MIRA. : But do not you know, that when favours are conferred upon instant and tedious sollicitation, that they diminish in their value, and that both the giver loses the grace, and the receiver lessens his pleasure ?

MILLA. : It may be in things of common application ; but never sure in love. O, I hate a lover that can dare to think he draws a moment's air, independent on the bounty of his mistress. There is not so impudent a thing in nature, as the sawcy look of an assured man, confident of success. The pedantick arrogance of a very husband has not so pragmatical an air. Ah ! I'll never marry, unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure.

MIRA. : Would you have 'em both before marriage ? Or will you be contented with the first now, and stay for the other 'till after grace ?

MILLA. : Ah, don't be impertinent—My dear liberty, shall I leave thee ? My faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you then adieu ? Ay-h, adieu—my morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, all ye *douceurs*, ye *someils du matin*, adieu—I can't do 't, 'tis more than impossible—Positively, Mirabell, I'll lye abed in a morning as long as I please.

MIRA. : Then I'll get up in a morning as early as I please.

MILLA. : Ah ! Idle creature, get up when you will—and dy'e hear. I won't be called names after I'm married ; positively I won't be called names.

MIRA. : Names !

MILLA. : Ay, as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweetheart, and the rest of that nauseous cant, in which men and their wives are so fulsomely familiar —I shall never bear that—Good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss before folks, like my Lady Fadler and Sir Francis : nor go to Hide Park together the first Sunday in a new chariot, to provoke eyes and whispers ; and then never be seen there together again ; as if we were proud of one another the first week, and ashamed of one another ever after. Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together, but let us be very strange and well bred : let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while ; and as well bred as if we were not married at all.

MIRA. : Have you any more conditions to offer ? Hitherto your demands are pretty reasonable.

MILLA. : Trifles,—as liberty to pay and receive visits to and from whom I please ; to write and receive letters, without interrogatories or wry faces on your part ; to wear what I please ; and chuse conversation with regard only to my own taste ; to have no obligation upon me to converse with wits that I don't like, because they are your acquaintance ; or to be intimate with fools because they may be your relations. Come to dinner when I please, dine in my dressing-room when I'm out of humour, without giving a reason. To have my closet inviolate ; to be sole empress of my tea-table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, wherever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles subscribed, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife.

MIRA. : Your bill of fare is something advanced in this latter account. Well, have I liberty to offer conditions—that when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond measure enlarged into a husband ?

MILLA. : You have free leave, propose your utmost, speak and spare not.

MIRA. : I thank you. *Inprimis* then, I covenant that your acquaintance be general ; that you admit no sworn confident, or intimate of your own sex ; no she friend to skreen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make trial of a mutual secresie. No decoy-duck to wheadle you a *fop—scrambling* to the play in a mask—then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you shall be found out—and rail at me for missing the play, and disappointing the frolick which you had to pick me up and prove my constancy.

MILLA. : Detestable *inprimis !* I go to the play in a mask !

MIRA. : *Item*, I article, that you continue to like your own face as long as I shall ; and while it passes current with me, that you endeavour not to new coin it. To which end, together with all vizards for the day, I prohibit all masks for the night, made of oiled-skins and I know not what—hog's bones, hare's gall, pig water, and the marrow of a roasted cat. In short, I forbid all commerce with the gentlewoman in *what-d'ye-call-it* Court. *Item*, I shut my doors against all bauds with baskets, and pennyworths of *muslin*, *china*, *fans*, *atlasses*, etc.—*Item*, when you shall be breeding——

MILLA. : Ah, name it not.

MIRA. : Which may be presumed, with a blessing on our endeavours——

MILLA. : Odious endeavours !

MIRA. : I denounce against all strait lacing, squeezing for a shape, 'till you mould my boy's head like a sugar-loaf ; and instead of a man-child, make me father to a crooked-billet. Lastly, to the dominion of the *tea-table* I submit.—But with *proviso*, that you exceed not in your province ; but restrain yourself to native and simple *tea-table* drinks, as *tea*, *chocolate*, and *coffee*. As likewise to genuine and authorised *tea-table* talk—such as mending of fashions, spoiling reputations, railing at absent friends, and so forth—but that on no account you encroach upon the men's prerogative, and presume to drink healths, or toast fellows ; for prevention of which, I banish all *foreign forces*, all auxiliaries to the *tea-table*, as *orange-brandy*, all *anniseed*, *cinamon*, *citron* and *Barbado's waters*, together with *ratafia* and the most noble spirit of *clary*.—But for *cowslip-wine*, *poppy-water*, and all *dormitives*, those I allow.— These *provisos* admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying husband.

MILLA. : O horrid *provisos* ! filthy strong waters ! I toast fellows, odious men ! I hate your odious *provisos*.

MIRA. : Then we're agreed. Shall I kiss your hand upon the contract ? and here comes one to be a witness to the sealing of the deed.

Enter MRS. FAINALL.

MILLA. : Fainall, what shall I do ? Shall I have him ? I think I must have him.

MRS. FAIN. : Ay, ay, take him, take him, what should you do ?

MILLA. : Well then—I'll take my death I'm in a horrid fright—Fainall, I shall never say it—Well—I think—I'll endure you.

MRS. FAIN. : Fy, fy, have him, have him, and tell him so in plain terms : for I am sure you have a mind to him.

MILLA. : Are you ? I think I have—and the horrid man looks as if he thought so too—Well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you—I won't be kissed, nor I won't be thanked—Here, kiss my hand though—so, hold your tongue now, don't say a word.

MRS. FAIN. : Mirabell, there's a necessity for your obedience ;—you have neither time to talk nor stay. My mother is coming ; and in my conscience, if she should see you, would fall into fits, and maybe not recover time enough to return to Sir Rowland ; who, as Foible tells me, is in a fair way to succeed. Therefore spare your extacies for another occasion, and slip down the back stairs, where Foible waits to consult you.

MILLA. : Ay, go, go. In the meantime I suppose you have said something to please me.

MIRA. : I am all obedience. [*Exit.*

MRS. FAIN. : Yonder Sir Wilfull's drunk; and so noisie that my mother has been forced to leave Sir Rowland to appease him ; but he answers her only with singing and drinking—What they may have done by this time I know not ; but Petulant and he were upon quarrelling as I came by.

MILLA. : Well, if Mirabell should not make a good husband, I am a lost thing ; for I find I love him violently.

MRS. FAIN. : So it seems ; for you mind not what's said to you.—If you doubt him, you had best take up with Sir Wilfull.

MILLA. : How can you name that superannuated lubber ? foh !

Enter WITWOUD *from drinking.*

MRS. FAIN. : So, is the fray made up, that you have left 'em ?

WIT. : Left 'em ? I could stay no longer—I have laughed like ten christnings—I am tipsie with laughing—if I had staid any longer I should have burst,—I must have been let out and pieced in the sides like an unsized camlet—Yes, yes, the fray is composed ; my lady came in like a *noli prosequi* and stopt the proceedings.

MILLA. : What was the dispute ?

WIT. : That's the jest ; there was no dispute. They could neither of 'em speak for rage ; and so fell a sputtering at one another like two roasting apples.

Enter PETULANT *drunk.*

WIT. : Now, Petulant ? all's over, all's well ? Gad, my head begins to whim it about—Why dost thou not speak ? thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fish.

PET. : Look you, Mrs. Millamant—if you can love me, dear nymph—say it—and that's the conclusion—pass on, or pass off,—that's all.

WIT. : Thou hast uttered volumes, folios, in less than *decimo sexto*, my dear Lacedemonian. Sirrah, Petulant, thou art an epitomiser of words.

PET. : Witwoud—you are an annihilator of sense.

WIT. : Thou art a retailer of phrases ; and dost deal in remnants of remnants, like a maker of pincushions—thou art in truth (metaphorically speaking) a speaker of shorthand.

PET. : Thou art (without a figure) just one half of an ass, and Baldwin yonder, thy half-brother, is the rest—a gemini of asses split, would make just four of you.

WIT. : Thou dost bite, my dear mustard-seed ; kiss me for that.

PET. : Stand off—I'll kiss no more males,—I have kissed your *twin* yonder in a humour of reconciliation, 'till he (*hiccup*) rises upon my stomach like a radish.

MILLA. : Eh ! filthy creature—what was the quarrel ?

PET. : There was no quarrel—there might have been a quarrel.

WIT. : If there had been words enow between 'em to have expressed provocation, they had gone together by the ears like a pair of castanets.

PET. : You were the quarrel.

MILLA. : Me !

PET. : If I have a humour to quarrel, I can make less matters conclude premises.—If you are not handsom, what then ; if I have a humour to prove it ?—If I shall have my reward, say so ; if not, fight for your face the next time yourself—I'll go sleep.

WIT. : Do, wrap thyself up like a woodlouse, and dream revenge—and hear me, if thou canst learn to write by to-morrow morning, pen me a challenge—I'll carry it for thee.

PET. : Carry your mistress's monkey a spider,—go flea dogs, and read romances—I'll go to bed to my maid. [*Exit.*

MRS. FAIN. : He's horridly drunk—how came you all in this pickle ?

WIT. : A plot, a plot, to get rid of the knight,—your husband's advice ; but he sneaked off.

Enter SIR WILFULL *drunk, and* LADY WISHFORT.

LADY : Out upon't, out upon't, at years of discretion, and comport yourself at this rantipole rate.

SIR WIL. : No offence, aunt.

LADY : Offence ? As I'm a person, I'm ashamed of you—Fogh ! how you stink of wine ! D'ye think my niece will ever endure such a *borachio* ! You're an absolute *borachio*.

SIR WIL. : *Borachio !*

LADY : At a time when you should commence an amour, and put your best foot foremost——

SIR WIL. : 'Sheart, an you grutch me your liquor, make a bill—give me more drink, and take my purse. [*Sings.*

Prithee fill me the glass
'Till it laugh in my face,
With ale that is potent and mellow ;
He that whines for a lass
Is an ignorant ass,
For a *bumper* has not its fellow.

But if you would have me marry my cousin, say the word, and I'll do't—Wilfull will do't, that's the word—Wilfull will do't, that's my crest—my motto I have forgot.

LADY : My nephew's a little overtaken, cousin—but 'tis with drinking your health—O' my word you are obliged to him——

SIR WIL. : *In vino veritas*, aunt :—If I drunk your health to-day, cousin, I am a *borachio*. But if you have a mind to be married say the word, and send for the piper, Wilfull will do't. If not, durst it away, and let's have t'other round—Tony, 'odsheart, where's Tony—Tony's an honest fellow, but he spits after a bumper, and that's a fault.

[*Sings.*

We'll drink and we'll never ha' done, boys,
Put the glass then around with the sun, boys,
Let Apollo's example invite us ;
For he's drunk every night,
And that makes him so bright,
That he's able next morning to light us.

The sun's a good pimple, an honest soaker, he has a cellar at your Antipodes. If I travel aunt. I touch at your Antipodes—your Antipodes are a good rascally sort of topsie-turvy fellows—if I had a bumper I'd stand upon my head and drink a health to 'em—a match or no match, cousin, with the hard name—aunt, Wilfull will do't. If she has her maidenhead let her look to't ; if she has not, let her keep her own counsel in the meantime, and cry out at the nine months' end.

MILLA. : Your pardon, madam, I can stay no longer—Sir Wilfull grows very powerful. Egh ! how he smells ! I shall be overcome if I stay. Come, cousin.

[*Exit with* MRS. FAINALL.

LADY : Smells ! he would poison a tallow-chandler and his family. Beastly creature, I know not what to do with him.—Travel, quoth a ; ay travel, travel, get thee gone, get thee but far enough, to the Saracens, or the Tartars, or the Turks—for thou art not fit to live in a Christian commonwealth, thou beastly pagan.

SIR WIL. : Turks, no ; no Turks, aunt : your Turks are infidels, and believe not in the grape. Your Mahometan, your Mussulman is a dry stinkard—no offence, aunt. My map says that your Turk is not so honest a man as your Christian—I cannot find by the map that your mufti is orthodox—whereby it is a plain case, that orthodox is a hard word, aunt, and (*hiccup*) Greek for claret. [*Sings.*

To drink is a Christian diversion
Unknown to the Turk or the Persian :
Let Mahometan fools
Live by heathenish rules,
And be damned over tea-cups and coffee.
But let British lads sing,
Crown a health to the king,
And a fig for your sultan and Sophy.

Ah, Tony ! [*Enter* FOIBLE *who whispers* LADY WISHFORT.

LADY : Sir Rowland impatient ? Good lack ! what shall I do with this beastly tumbril ?—Go lie down and sleep, you sot—or as I'm a person, I'll have you bastinadoed with broom-sticks. Call up the wenches with broom-sticks.

SIR WIL. : Ahey ? Wenches, where are the wenches ?

LADY : Dear Cousin Witwoud, get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. I have an affair of moment that invades me with some precipitation.—You will oblige me to all futurity.

WIT. : Come, knight—pox on him, I don't know what to say to him—will you go to a cock-match ?

SIR WIL. : With a wench, Tony ? Is she a shake-bag, sirrah ? Let me bite your cheek for that.

WIT. : Horrible ! He has a breath like a bagpipe—Ay, ay, come, will you march, my Salopian ?

SIR WIL. : Lead on, little Tony—I'll follow thee, my Anthony, my Tantony. Sirrah, thou shalt be my Tantony, and I'll be thy pig.

—And a fig for your sultan and Sophy.

[*Exit with* WITWOUD.

LADY : This will never do. It will never make a match—at least before he has been abroad.

Enter WAITWELL *disguised as* SIR ROWLAND.

LADY : Dear Sir Rowland, I am confounded with confusion at the retrospection of my own rudeness,—I have more pardons to ask than the pope distributes in the year of jubile. But I hope where there is likely to be so near an alliance, we may unbend the severity of decorum, and dispense with a little ceremony.

WAIT. : My impatience, madam, is the effect of my transport ;—and 'till I have the possession of your adorable person, I am tantalised on the rack ; and do but hang, madam, on the tenter of expectation.

LADY : You have excess of gallantry, Sir Rowland ; and press things to a conclusion with a most prevailing vehemence.—But a day or two for decency of marriage——

WAIT. : For decency of funeral, madam. The delay will break my heart—or if that should fail, I shall be poisoned. My nephew will get an inkling of my designs, and poison me,—and I would willingly starve him before I die—I would gladly go out of the world with that satisfaction.—That would be some comfort to me, if I could but live so long as to be revenged on that unnatural viper.

LADY : Is he so unnatural, say you ? Truly I would contribute much both to the saving of your life, and the accomplishment of your revenge—not that I respect myself ; though he has been a perfidious wretch to me.

WAIT. : Perfidious to you !

LADY : O Sir Rowland, the hours that he has died away at my feet, the tears that he has shed, the oaths that he has sworn, the palpitations that he has felt, the trances and the tremblings, the ardors and the ecstacies, the kneelings, and the risings, the heart-heavings and the hand-gripings, the pangs and the pathetick regards of his protesting eyes ! Oh, no memory can register.

WAIT. : What, my rival ! Is the rebel my rival ? a' dies.

LADY : No, don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland, starve him gradually inch by inch.

WAIT. : I'll do't. In three weeks he shall be bare-foot ; in a month out at knees with begging an alms,—he shall starve upward and upward, 'till he has nothing living but his head, and then go out in a stink like a candle's end upon a save-all.

LADY : Well, Sir Rowland, you have the way,—you are no novice in the labyrinth of love—you have the clue—But as I am a person, Sir Rowland, you must not attribute my yielding to any sinister appetite, or indigestion of widow-hood ; nor impute my complacency to any lethargy of continence—I hope you do not think me prone to any iteration of nuptials——

WAIT. : Far be it from me——

LADY : If you do, I protest I must recede—or think that I have made a prostitution of decorums, but in the vehemence of compassion, and to save the life of a person of so much importance——

WAIT. : I esteem it so——

LADY : Or else you wrong my condescension——

WAIT. : I do not, I do not——

LADY : Indeed you do.

WAIT. : I do not, fair shrine of virtue.

LADY : If you think the least scruple of carnality was an ingredient——

WAIT. : Dear madam, no. You are all camphire and frankincense, all chastity and odour.

LADY : Or that——

Enter FOIBLE.

FOIB. : Madam, the dancers are ready, and there's one with a letter, who must deliver it into your own hands.

LADY : Sir Rowland, will you give me leave ? Think favourably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a person who would suffer racks in honour's cause, dear Sir Rowland, and will wait on you incessantly. [*Exit.*

WAIT. : Fie, fie !—What a slavery have I undergone ; spouse, hast thou any cordial, I want spirits.

FOIB. : What a washy rogue art thou, to pant thus for a quarter of an hour's lying and swearing to a fine lady ?

WAIT. : O, she is the antidote to desire. Spouse, thou wilt fare the worse for't—I shall have no appetite to iteration of nuptials this eight and forty hours—By this hand I'd rather be a chairman in the dog-days, than act Sir Rowland 'till this time to-morrow.

Enter LADY WISHFORT *with a letter.*

LADY : Call in the dancers ;—Sir Rowland, we'll sit, i you please, and see the entertainment. [*Dance.*

Now with your permission, Sir Rowland, I will peruse my letter—I would open it in your presence, because I would not make you uneasie. If it should make you uneasie I would burn it—speak if it does—but you may see, the superscription is like a woman's hand.

FOIB. : By heaven ! Mrs. Marwood's, I know it,—my heart akes—get it from her—— [*To him.*

WAIT. : A woman's hand ? No, madam, that's no woman's hand, I see that already. That's somebody whose throat must be cut.

LADY : Nay, Sir Rowland, since you give me a proof of your passion by your jealousie, I promise you I'll make a return, by a frank communication—You shall see it—we'll open it together—look you here.

(*Reads*) "Madam, though unknown to you,"—Look you there, 'tis from nobody that I know—" I have that honour for your character, that I think myself obliged to let you know you are abused. He who pretends to be Sir Rowland is a cheat and a rascal——" Oh heavens ! what's this ?

FOIB. : Unfortunate, all's ruined.

WAIT. : How, how, let me see, let me see (*reading*), " A rascal and disguised, and suborned for that imposture,"—O villany ! O villany !—" by the contrivance of——"

LADY : I shall faint, I shall die, oh !

FOIB. : Say 'tis your nephew's hand.—Quickly, his plot, swear, swear it. [*To him.*

WAIT. : Here's a villain ! Madam, don't you perceive it, don't you see it ?

LADY : Too well, too well. I have seen too much.

WAIT. : I told you at first I knew the hand—A woman's hand ? The rascal writes a sort of a large hand ; your Roman hand—I saw there was a throat to be cut presently. If he were my son, as he is my nephew, I'd pistol him——

FOIB. : O treachery ! But are you sure, Sir Rowland, it is his writing ?

WAIT. : Sure ? Am I here ? do I live ? do I love this pearl of India ? I have twenty letters in my pocket from him, in the same character.

LADY : How !

FOIB. : O what luck it is, Sir Rowland, that you were present at this juncture ! This was the business that brought Mr. Mirabell disguised to Madam Millamant this afternoon. I thought something was contriving, when he stole by me and would have hid his face.

LADY : How, how !—I heard the villain was in the house indeed ; and now I remember, my niece went away abruptly, when Sir Wilfull was to have made his addresses.

FOIB. : Then, then, madam, Mr. Mirabell waited for her in her chamber ; but I would not tell your ladiship to discompose you when you were to receive Sir Rowland.

WAIT. : Enough, his date is short.

FOIB. : No, good Sir Rowland, don't incur the law.

WAIT. : Law ! I care not for law. I can but die, and 'tis in a good cause—my lady shall be satisfied of my truth and innocence, though it cost me my life.

LADY : No, dear Sir Rowland, don't fight, if you should be killed I must never shew my face ; or hanged—O consider my reputation, Sir Rowland—No, you shan't fight.—I'll go in and examine my niece ; I'll make her confess. I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your love, not to fight.

WAIT. : I am charmed, madam, I obey. But some proof you must let me give you ;—I'll go for a black box, which contains the writings of my whole estate, and deliver that into your hands.

LADY : Ay, dear Sir Rowland, that will be some comfort, bring the black box.

WIT. : And may I presume to bring a contract to be signed this night? May I hope so far?

LADY : Bring what you will ; but come alive, pray come alive. O this is a happy discovery.

WAIT. : Dead or alive I'll come—and married we will be in spight of treachery ; ay, and get an heir that shall defeat the last remaining glimpse of hope in my abandoned nephew. Come, my buxom widow :

E'er long you shall substantial proof receive
That I'm an arrant knight——

FOIB. : Or arrant knave.

ACT V

SCENE I.—*Same as last scene.*

LADY WISHFORT *and* FOIBLE.

LADY : Out of my house, out of my house, thou viper, thou serpent, that I have fostered ; thou bosom traitress, that I raised from nothing—begone, begone, begone, go, go,—that I took from washing of old gause and weaving of dead hair, with a bleak blue nose, over a chafing-dish of starved embers, and dining behind a traver's rag, in a shop no bigger than a bird-cage,—go, go, starve again, do, do.

FOIB. : Dear madam, I'll beg pardon on my knees.

LADY. : Away, out, out, go set up for yourself again—do, drive a trade, do, with your threepenny-worth of small ware, flaunting upon a packthread, under a brandy-feller's bulk, or against a dead wall by a ballad-monger. Go, hang out an old frisoneer-gorget with a yard of yellow colberteen again ; do ; an old gnawed mask, two rows of pins and a child's fiddle ; a glass necklace with the beads broken, and a quilted nightcap with one ear. Go, go, drive a trade.—These were your commodities, you treacherous trull, this was the merchandize you dealt in, when I took you into my house, placed you next myself, and made you governante of my whole family. You have forgot this, have you, now you have feathered your nest?

FOIB. : No, no, dear madam. Do but hear me, have but a moment's patience—I'll confess all. Mr. Mirabell seduced me ; I am not the first that he has wheadled with his dissembling tongue ; your ladiship's own wisdom has been deluded by him, then how should I, a poor ignorant, defend myself? O madam, if you knew but what he promised me, and how he assured me your ladiship should come to no damage—or else the wealth of the Indies should not have bribed me to conspire against so good, so sweet, so kind a lady as you have been to me.

LADY : No damage? What, to betray me, to marry me to a cast-serving-man ; to make me a receptacle, an hospital for a decayed pimp? No damage? O thou frontless impudence, more than a big-bellied actress.

FOIB. : Pray do but hear me, madam, he could not marry your ladiship, madam—no indeed, his marriage was to have been void in law ; for he was married to me first, to secure your ladiship. He could not have bedded your ladiship ; for if he had consummated with your ladiship, he must have run the risque of the law, and been put upon his clergy—Yes indeed, I enquired of the law in that case before I would meddle or make.

LADY : What, then I have been your property, have I? I have been convenient to you it seems,—while you were catering for Mirabell ; I have been broaker for you? What, have you made a passive bawd of me?—This exceeds all precedent ; I am brought to fine uses, to become a botcher of second-hand marriages between Abigails and Andrews! I'll couple you. Yes, I'll baste you

together, you and your Philander. I'll Duke's Place you, as I'm a person. Your turtle is in custody already : you shall coo in the same cage, if there be constable or warrant in the parish. [*Exit.*

FOIB. : O that ever I was born, O that I was ever married,—a bride, ay, I shall be a Bridewell-bride. Oh !

Enter MRS. FAINALL.

MRS. FAIN. : Poor Foible, what's the matter ?

FOIB. : O madam, my lady's gone for a constable ; I shall be had to a justice, and put to Bridewell to beat hemp ; poor Waitwell's gone to prison already.

MRS. FAIN. : Have a good heart, Foible, Mirabell's gone to give security for him. This is all Marwood's and my husband's doing.

FOIB. : Yes, yes ; I know it, madam ; she was in my lady's closet, and overheard all that you said to me before dinner. She sent the letter to my lady ; and that missing effect, Mr. Fainall laid this plot to arrest Waitwell, when he pretended to go for the papers ; and in the meantime Mrs. Marwood declared all to my lady.

MRS. FAIN. : Was there no mention made of me in the letter ?—My mother does not suspect my being in the confederacy ? I fancy Marwood has not told her, though she has told my husband.

FOIB. : Yes, madam ; but my lady did not see that part : we stifled the letter before she read so far. Has that mischievous devil told Mr. Fainall of your ladiship then ?

MRS. FAIN. : Ay, all's out, my affair with Mirabell, everything discovered. This is the last day of our living together, that's my comfort.

FOIB. : Indeed, madam, and so 'tis a comfort, if you knew all,— he has been even with your ladiship ; which I could have told you long enough since, but I love to keep peace and quietness by my good will : I had rather bring friends together than set 'em at distance. But Mrs. Marwood and he are nearer related than ever their parents fought for.

MRS. FAIN. : Say'st thou so, Foible ? Canst thou prove this ?

FOIB. : I can take my oath of it, madam, so can Mrs. Mincing ; we have had many a fair word from Madam Marwood, to conceal something that passed in our chamber one evening when you were at Hide Park ;—and we were thought to have gone a walking : but we went up unawares,—though we were sworn to secresie too ; Madam Marwood took a book and swore us upon it : but it was a book of poems,—so long as it was not a Bible-oath, we may break it with a safe conscience.

MRS. FAIN. : This discovery is the most opportune thing I could wish. Now Mincing ?

Enter MINCING.

MINC. : My lady would speak with Mrs. Foible, mem. Mr. Mirabell is with her ; he has set your spouse at liberty, Mrs. Foible, and would have you hide yourself in my lady's closet, 'till my old lady's anger is abated. O, my old lady is in a perilous passion at something Mr. Fainall has said ; he swears, and my old lady cries. There's a fearful hurricane I vow. He says, mem, how that he'll have my lady's fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorced.

MRS. FAIN : Does your lady or Mirabell know that ?

MINC. : Yes, mem, they have sent me to see if Sir Wilfull be sober, and to bring him to them. My lady is resolved to have him I think, rather than lose such a vast sum as six thousand pound. O, come, Mrs. Foible, I hear my old lady.

MRS. FAIN. : Foible, you must tell Mincing that she must prepare to vouch when I call her.

FOIB. : Yes, yes, madam.

MINC. : O yes, mem, I'll vouch anything for your ladiship's service, be what it will.

SCENE II.

Another room in LADY WISHFORT'S *house.*

MRS. FAINALL, LADY WISHFORT, MARWOOD.

LADY : O my dear friend, how can I enumerate the benefits that I have received from your goodness ? To you I owe the timely discovery of the false vows of Mirabell ; to you I owe the detection of the impostor Sir Rowland. And now you are become an intercessor with my son-in-law, to save the honour of my house, and compound for the frailties of my daughter. Well, friend, you are enough to reconcile me to the bad world, or else I would retire to desarts and solitudes ; and feed harmless sheep by groves and purling streams. Dear Marwood, let us leave the world, and retire by ourselves and be shepherdesses.

MRS. MAR. : Let us first dispatch the affair in hand, madam. We shall have leisure to think of retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concerned in the treaty.

LADY : O daughter, daughter, is it possible thou shouldst be my child, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and as I may say, another me, and yet transgress the most minute particle of severe virtue ? Is it possible you should lean aside to iniquity, who have been cast in the direct mold of virtue ? I have not only been a mold but a pattern for you, and a model for you, after you were brought into the world.

MRS. FAIN. : I don't understand your ladiship.

LADY : Not understand ? Why, have you not been naught ? Have you not been sophisticated ? Not understand ? Here I am ruined to compound for your caprices and your cuckoldoms. I must pawn my plate and my jewels, and ruin my niece, and all little enough——

MRS. FAIN. : I am wronged and abused, and so are you. 'Tis a false accusation, as false as hell, as false as your friend there, ay, or your friend's friend, my false husband.

MRS. MAR. My friend, Mrs. Fainall ? Your husband my friend, what do you mean ?

MRS. FAIN. : I know what I mean, madam, and so do you ; and so shall the world at a time convenient.

MRS. MAR. : I am sorry to see you so passionate, madam. More temper would look more like innocence. But I have done. I am sorry my zeal to serve your ladiship and family should admit of misconstruction, or make me liable to affronts. You will pardon me, madam, if I meddle no more with an affair in which I am not personally concerned.

LADY : O dear friend, I am so ashamed that you should meet with such returns —You ought to ask pardon on your knees, ungrateful creature ; she deserves more from you, than all your life can accomplish—O don't leave me destitute in this perplexity ;—no, stick to me, my good genius.

MRS. FAIN. : I tell you, madam, you're abused—Stick to you ? ay, like a leach, to suck your best blood—she'll drop off when she's full. Madam, you shan't pawn a bodkin, nor part with a brass counter, in composition for me. I defie 'em all. Let 'em prove their aspersions : I know my own innocence, and dare stand a trial. [*Exit.*

LADY : Why, if she should be innocent, if she should be wronged after all, ha ? I don't know what to think,—and I promise you, her education has been unexceptionable—I may say it ; for I chiefly made it my own care to initiate her very infancy in the rudiments of virtue, and to impress upon her tender years a young odium and aversion to the very sight of men,—ay, friend, she would ha' shrieked if she had but seen a man, 'till she was in her teens. As I'm a person 'tis true.—She was never suffered to play with a male-child, though but in coats ; nay, her very babies were of the feminine gender,—O, she never looked a man in the face but her own father, or the chaplain, and him we made a shift to put upon her for a woman, by the help of his long garments, and his sleek face ; 'till she was going in her fifteen.

MRS. MAR. : 'Twas much she should be deceived so long.

LADY : I warrant you, or she would never have born to have been catechised by him ; and have heard his long lectures against singing and dancing, and such debaucheries ; and going to filthy plays ; and prophane musick-meetings where the lewd trebles squeek nothing but bawdy, and the bases roar blasphemy. O, she would have swooned at the sight or name of an obscene play-book—and can I think after all this, that my daughter can be naught ? What a whore ? And thought it excommunication to set her foot within the door of a play-house. O dear friend, I can't believe it, no, no ; as she says, let him prove it, let him prove it.

MRS. MAR. : Prove it, madam ? What, and have your name prostituted in a publick court ; yours and your daughter's reputation worried at the bar by a pack of bawling lawyers ? To be ushered in with an *O yes* of scandal ; and have your case opened by an old fumbling leacher in a quoif like a man midwife, to bring your daughter's infamy to light ; to be a theme for legal punsters, and quiblers by the statute ; and become a jest against a rule of court, where there is no precedent for a jest in any record ; not even in Doomsday Book : to discompose the gravity of the bench, and provoke naughty interrogatories in more naughty law Latin ; while the good judge, tickled with the proceeding, simpers under a grey beard, and figes off and on his cushion as if he had swallowed cantharides, or sate upon cow-itch.

LADY : O, 'tis very hard ?

MRS. MAR. : And then to have my young revellers of the Temple take notes, like prentices at a conventicle ; and after talk it over again in Commons, or before drawers in an eating-house.

LADY : Worse and worse.

MRS. MAR. : Nay, this is nothing ; if it would end here 'twere well. But it must after this be consigned by the shorthand writers to the publick press ; and from thence be transferred to the hands, nay, into the throats and lungs of hawkers, with voices more licentious than the loud flounder-man's : and this you must hear 'till you are stunned ; nay, you must hear nothing else for some days.

LADY : O, 'tis insupportable. No, no, dear friend, make it up, make it up ; ay, ay, I'll compound. I'll give up all, myself and my all, my niece and her all—anything, everything for composition.

MRS. MAR. : Nay, madam, I advise nothing, I only lay before you, as a friend, the inconveniences which perhaps you have overseen. Here comes Mr. Fainall, if he will be satisfied to huddle up all in silence, I shall be glad. You must think I would rather congratulate than condole with you.

Enter FAINALL.

LADY : Ay, ay, I do not doubt it, dear Marwood : no, no, I do not doubt it.

FAIN. : Well, madam ; I have suffered myself to be overcome by the importunity of this lady your friend ; and am content you shall enjoy your own proper estate during life ; on condition you oblige yourself never to marry, under such penalty as I think convenient.

LADY : Never to marry ?

FAIN. : No more Sir Rowlands,—the next imposture may not be so timely detected.

MRS. MAR. : That condition, I dare answer, my lady will consent to, without difficulty ; she has already but too much experienced the perfidiousness of men. Besides, madam, when we retire to our pastoral solitude we shall bid adieu to all other thoughts.

LADY : Ay, that's true ; but in case of necessity ; as of health, or some such emergency——

FAIN. : O, if you are prescribed marriage, you shall be considered ; I will only reserve to myself the power to chuse for you. If your physick be wholesome, it matters not who is your apothecary. Next, my wife shall settle on me the remainder of her fortune, not made over already ; and for her maintenance depend entirely on my discretion.

LADY : This is most inhumanly savage ; exceeding the barbarity of a Muscovite husband.

FAIN. : I learned it from his czarish majesty's retinue, in a winter evening's conference over brandy and pepper, amongst other secrets of matrimony and policy, as they are at present practised in the northern hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively. Lastly, I will be endowed, in right of my wife, with that six thousand pound, which is the moiety of Mrs. Millamant's fortune in your possession ; and which she has forfeited (as will appear by the last will and testament of your deceased husband, Sir Jonathan Wishfort) by her disobedience in contracting herself against your consent or knowledge ; and by refusing the offered match with Sir Wilfull Witwoud, which you, like a careful aunt, had provided for her.

LADY : My nephew was *non compos* ; and could not make his addresses.

FAIN. : I come to make demands—I'll hear no objections.

LADY : You will grant me time to consider ?

FAIN. : Yes, while the instrument is drawing, to which you must set your hand 'till more sufficient deeds can be perfected : which I will take care shall be done with all possible speed. In the meanwhile I will go for the said instrument, and 'till my return you may ballance this matter in your own discretion [*Exit.*

LADY : This insolence is beyond all precedent, all parallel ; must I be subject to this merciless villain ?

MRS. MAR. : 'Tis severe indeed, madam, that you should smart for your daughter's wantonness.

LADY : 'Twas against my consent that she married this barbarian, but she would have him, though her year was not out.—Ah ! her first husband, my son Languish, would not have carried it thus. Well, that was my choice, this is hers ; she is matched now with a witness—I shall be mad, dear friend, is there no comfort for me ? Must I live to be confiscated at this rebel-rate ?—Here come two more of my Egyptian plagues too.

Enter MILLAMANT *and* SIR WILFULL.

SIR WIL. : Aunt, your servant.

LADY : Out, caterpillar, call not me aunt ; I know thee not.

SIR WIL. : I confess I have been a little in disguise, as they say—'Sheart ! and I'm sorry for't. What would you have ? I hope I committed no offence, aunt—and if I did I am willing to make satisfaction ; and what can a man say fairer ? If I have broke anything I'll pay for't, an it cost a pound. And so let that content for what's past, and make no more words. For what's to come, to pleasure you I'm willing to marry my cousin. So pray let's all be friends, she and I are agreed upon the matter before a witness.

LADY : How's this, dear niece ? Have I any comfort ? Can this be true ?

MILLA. : I am content to be a sacrifice to your repose, madam ; and to convince you that I had no hand in the plot, as you were misinformed, I have laid my commands on Mirabell to come in person, and be a witness that I give my hand to this flower of knighthood ; and for the contract that passed between Mirabell and me, I have obliged him to make a resignation of it in your ladiship's presence ;—he is without, and waits your leave for admittance.

LADY : Well, I'll swear I am something revived at this testimony of your obedience ; but I cannot admit that traitor,—I fear I cannot fortifie myself to support his appearance. He is as terrible to me as a Gorgon ; if I see him I fear I shall turn to stone, petrifie incessantly.

MILLA. : If you disoblige him he may resent your refusal, and insist upon the contract still. Then 'tis the last time he will be offensive to you.

LADY : Are you sure it will be the last time ?—If I were sure of that—shall I never see him again ?

MILLA. : Sir Wilfull, you and he are to travel together, are you not ?

SIR WIL. : 'Sheart, the gentleman's a civil gentleman, aunt, let him come in : why, we are sworn brothers and fellow-travellers.—We are to be Pylades and Orestes, he and I—he is to be my interpreter in foreign parts. He has been over-seas once already ; and with proviso that I marry my cousin, will cross 'em once again, only to bear me company.—'Sheart, I'll call him in,—an I sit on't once, he shall come in ; and see who'll hinder him.

[*Goes to the door and hems.*

MRS. MAR. : This is precious fooling, if it would pass ; but I'll know the bottom of it.

LADY : O dear Marwood, you are not going ?

MAR. : Not far, madam ; I'll return immediately. [*Exit.*

Enter MIRABELL.

SIR WIL. : Look up, man, I'll stand by you, 'sbud, an she do frown, she can't kill you ;—besides—harkee, she dare not frown desperately, because her face is none of her own ; 'sheart, and she should her forehead would wrinkle like the coat of a cream-cheese ; but much for that, fellow-traveller.

MIRA. : If a deep sense of the many injuries I have offered to so good a lady, with a sincere remorse, and a hearty contrition, can but obtain the least glance of compassion, I am too happy—Ah, madam, there was a time—but let it be forgotten—I confess I have deservedly forfeited the high place I once held, of sighing at your feet ; nay, kill me not, by turning from me in disdain—I come not to plead for favour ; nay, not for pardon ; I am a suppliant only for pity—I am going where I never shall behold you more——

SIR WIL. : How, fellow-traveller !—You shall go by yourself then.

MIRA. : Let me be pitied first ; and afterwards forgotten—I ask no more.

SIR WIL. : By'r Lady, a very reasonable request, and will cost you nothing, aunt.—Come, come, forgive and forget, aunt, why you must an you are a Christian.

MIRA. : Consider, madam, in reality, you could not receive much prejudice ; it was an innocent device ; though I confess it had a face of guiltiness, it was

at most an artifice which love contrived—and errors which love produces have ever been accounted venial. At least think it is punishment enough, that I have lost what in my heart I hold most dear, that to your cruel indignation I have offered up this beauty, and with her my peace and quiet ; nay, all my hopes of future comfort.

SIR WIL. : An he does not move me, would I may never be o' the quorum,—an it were not as good a deed as to drink, to give her to him again, I would I might never take shipping—Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I shall melt, I can tell you that. My contract went no farther than a little mouth-glew, and that's hardly dry ;—one doleful sigh more from my fellow-traveller and 'tis dissolved.

LADY : Well, nephew, upon your account—Ah, he has a false insinuating tongue—Well, sir, I will stifle my just resentment at my nephew's request.—I will endeavour what I can to forget,—but on proviso that you resign the contract with my niece immediately.

MIRA. : It is in writing and with papers of concern ; but I have sent my servant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all acknowledgments for your transcendent goodness.

LADY : Oh, he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue ;—when I did not see him I could have bribed a villain to his assassination ; but his appearance rakes the embers which have so long lain smothered in my breast.—— [*Aside.*

Enter FAINALL *and* MRS. MARWOOD.

FAIN. : Your date of deliberation, madam, is expired. Here is the instrument, are you prepared to sign ?

LADY : If I were prepared, I am not impowered. My niece exerts a lawful claim, having matched herself by my direction to Sir Wilfull.

FAIN. : That sham is too gross to pass on me—though 'tis imposed on you, madam.

MILLA. : Sir, I have given my consent.

MIRA. : And, sir, I have resigned my pretensions.

SIR WIL. : And, sir, I assert my right ; and will maintain it in defiance of you, sir, and of your instrument. 'Sheart, an you talk of an instrument, sir, I have an old fox by my thigh shall hack your instrument of ram vellam to shreds, sir. It shall not be sufficient for a mittimus or a tailor's measure ; therefore withdraw your instrument, sir, or by'r Lady I shall draw mine.

LADY : Hold, nephew, hold.

MILLA. : Good Sir Wilfull, respite your valour.

FAIN. : Indeed ? Are you provided of your guard, with your single beef-eater there ? But I'm prepared for you ; and insist upon my first proposal. You shall submit your own estate to my management, and absolutely make over my wife's to my sole use ; as pursuant to the purport and tenor of this other covenant.—I suppose, madam, your consent is not requisite in this case nor, Mr. Mirabell, your resignation ; nor, Sir Wilfull, your right—you may draw your fox if you please sir, and make a bear-garden flourish somewhere else : for here it will not avail. This, my Lady Wishfort, must be subscribed, or your darling daughter's turned adrift, like a leaky hulk to sink or swim, as she and the current of this lewd town can agree.

LADY : Is there no means, no remedy, to stop my ruin ? Ungrateful wretch ! dost thou not owe thy being, thy subsistance, to my daughter's fortune ?

FAIN. : I'll answer you when I have the rest of it in my possession.

MIRA. : But that you would not accept of a remedy from my hands—I own I have not deserved you should owe any obligation to me ; or else perhaps I could davise——

LADY : O what ? what ? to save me and my child from ruin, from want, I'll forgive all that's past ; nay, I'll consent to anything to come, to be delivered from this tyranny.

MIRA. : Ay, madam ; but that is too late, my reward is intercepted. You have disposed of her, who only could have made me a compensation for all my services ;—but be it as it may, I am resolved I'll serve you, you shall not be wronged in this savage manner.

LADY : How ! Dear Mr. Mirabell, can you be so generous at last ! But it is not possible. Harkee, I'll break my nephew's match, you shall have my niece yet, and all her fortune, if you can but save me from this imminent danger.

MIRA. : Will you ? I take you at your word. I ask no more. I must have leave for two criminals to appear.

LADY : Ay, ay, anybody, anybody.

MIRA. : Foible is one, and a penitent.

Enter MRS. FAINALL, FOIBLE *and* MINCING.

MIRA. *and* LADY WISHFORT *go to* MRS. FAIN. *and* FOIBLE.

MRS. MAR. : O my shame ! these corrupt things are brought hither to expose me. [*To* FAIN.

FAIN. : If it must all come out, why let 'em know it, 'tis but *the way of the world*. That shall not urge me to relinquish or abate one title of my terms, no, I will insist the more.

FOIB. : Yes indeed, madam, I'll take my Bible-oath of it.

MINC. : And so will I, mem.

LADY : O Marwood, Marwood, art thou false ? my friend deceive me ? Hast thou been a wicked accomplice with that profligate man ?

MRS. MAR. : Have you so much ingratitude and injustice, to give credit against your friend, to the aspersions of two such mercenary truls ?

MINC. : Mercenary, mem ? I scorn your words. 'Tis true we found you and Mr. Fainall in the blue garret ; by the same token, you swore us to secresie upon Messalinas's poems. Mercenary ? No, if we would have been mercenary, we should have held our tongues ; you would have bribed us sufficiently.

FAIN. : Go, you are an insignificant thing.—Well, what are you the better for this ! Is this Mr. Mirabell's expedient ? I'll be put off no longer—You, thing, that was a wife, shall smart for this. I will not leave thee wherewithal to hide thy shame : your body shall be naked as your reputation.

MRS. FAIN. : I despise you, and defie your malice—you have aspersed me wrongfully—I have proved your falsehood—go you and your treacherous—I will not name it, but starve together—perish.

FAIN. : Not while you are worth a groat, indeed, my dear. Madam, I'll be fooled no longer.

LADY : Ah, Mr. Mirabell, this is small comfort, the detection of this affair.

MIRA. : O in good time—Your leave for the other offender and penitent to appear, madam.

Enter WAITWELL *with a box of writings.*

LADY. : O Sir Rowland—Well, rascal.

WAIT. : What your ladiship pleases.—I have brought the black box at last, madam.

MIRA. : Give it me. Madam, you remember your promise.

LADY : Ay, dear sir.

MIRA. : Where are the gentlemen ?

WAIT. : At hand, sir, rubbing their eyes,—just risen from sleep.
FAIN. : S'death, what's this to me ? I'll not wait your private concerns.

Enter PETULANT *and* WITWOUD.

PET. : How now ? what's the matter ? who's hand's out ?
WIT. : Hey day ! what, are you all got together, like players at the end of the last act ?
MIRA. : You may remember, gentlemen, I once requested your hands as witnesses to a certain parchment.
WIT. : Ay, I do, my hand I remember—Petulant set his mark.
MIRA. : You wrong him, his name is fairly written, as shall appear—You do not remember, gentlemen, anything of what that parchment contained ?
[*Undoing the box.*
WIT. : No.
PET. : Not I. I writ, I read nothing.
MIRA. : Very well, now you shall know—Madam, your promise.
LADY : Ay, ay, sir, upon my honour.
MIRA. : Mr. Fainall, it is now time that you should know that your lady, while she was at her own disposal, and before you had by your insinuations wheadled her out of a pretended settlement of the greatest part of her fortune——
FAIN. : Sir ! pretended !
MIRA. : Yes, sir. I say that this lady while a widow, having it seems received some cautions respecting your inconstancy and tyranny of temper, which from her own partial opinion and fondness of you she could never have suspected—she did, I say, by the wholesome advice of friends and of sages learned in the laws of this land, deliver this same as her act and deed to me in trust, and to the uses within mentioned. You may read if you please—(*holding out the parchment*) though perhaps what is written on the back may serve your occasions.
FAIN. : Very likely, sir. What's here ? Damnation !
(*Reads*) : "A deed of conveyance of the whole estate real of Arabella Languish, widow, in trust to Edward Mirabell."—Confusion !
MIRA. : Even so, sir, 'tis *the way of the world*, sir ; of the widows of the world. I suppose this deed may bear an elder date than what you have obtained from your lady.
FAIN. : Perfidious fiend ! then thus I'll be revenged.——
[*Offers to run at* MRS. FAIN.
SIR WIL. : Hold, sir, now you may make your bear-garden flourish somewhere else, sir.
FAIN. : Mirabell, you shall hear of this, sir, be sure you shall.—Let me pass, oaf. [*Exit.*
MRS. FAIN. : Madam, you seem to stifle your resentment : you had better give it vent.
MRS. MAR. : Yes, it shall have vent—and to your confusion, or I'll perish in the attempt [*Exit.*
LADY : O daughter, daughter, 'tis plain thou hast inherited thy mother's prudence.
MRS. FAIN. : Thank Mr. Mirabell, a cautious friend, to whose advice all is owing.
LADY : Well, Mr. Mirabell, you have kept your promise—and I must perform mine.—First I pardon for your sake Sir Rowland there and Foible—the next thing is to break the matter to my nephew—and how to do that——

MIRA. : For that, madam, give yourself no trouble,—let me have your consent —Sir Wilfull is my friend ; he has had compassion upon lovers, and generously engaged a volunteer in this action, for our service ; and now designs to prosecute his travels.

SIR WIL. : 'Sheart, aunt, I have no mind to marry. My cousin's a fine lady and the gentleman loves her, and she loves him, and they deserve one another ; my resolution is to see foreign parts—I have set on't—and when I'm set on't, I must do't. And if these two gentlemen would travel too, I think they may be spared.

PET. : For my part, I say little—I think things are best off or on.

WIT. : I gad, I understand nothing of the matter,—I'm in a maze yet, like a dog in a dancing-school.

LADY : Well, sir, take her, and with her all the joy I can give you.

MILLA. : Why does not the man take me ? Would you have me give myself to you over again ?

MIRA. : Ay, and over and over again.—(*Kisses her hand.*) I would have you as often as possibly I can. Well, Heaven grant I love you not too well, that's all my fear.

SIR WIL. : 'Sheart, you'll have time enough to toy after you're married ; or if you will toy now, let us have a dance in the meantime ; that we who are not lovers may have some other employment, besides looking on.

MIRA. : With all my heart, dear Sir Wilfull. What shall we do for musick ?

FOIB. : O sir, some that were provided for Sir Rowland's entertainment are yet within call. [*A dance.*

LADY : As I am a person I can hold out no longer ;—I have wasted my spirits so to-day already, that I am ready to sink under the fatigue ; and I cannot but have some fears upon me yet, that my son Fainall will pursue some desperate course.

MIRA. : Madam, disquiet not yourself on that account ; to my knowledge his circumstances are such, he must of force comply. For my part, I will contribute all that in me lyes to a reunion ; in the meantime, madam (*to* MRS. FAIN.), let me before these witnesses restore to you this deed of trust ; it may be a means, well managed, to make you live easily together.

From hence let those be warned, who mean to wed ;
Lest mutual falshood stain the bridal-bed :
For each deceiver to his cost may find,
That marriage frauds too oft are paid in kind.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

1706

THE RECRUITING OFFICER

(By GEORGE FARQUHAR)

Some critics, lamenting the brief life of the Comedy of Manners, would seem to insinuate that, but for this, that, and the other, it might have been flourishing to this day. The fact is that it had very little to say, and, having said it, ceased to function. George Farquhar, (1678–1707) has been maligned for trying to stave off the evil day by saying something a little different. In the same way, Fletcher and Massinger are often scolded because they brought a new sort of life into Elizabethan drama when the old life was practically extinct. *The Way of the World* is as solid and brilliant as crystal. It is

also as sterile. Farquhar, availing himself of the technique, endeavoured, in *The Recruiting Officer* to express something of his own fresher and more human outlook on life. He was an Irishman, and he had a lively personal experience (as recruiting officer in Shrewsbury) to draw on. His previous plays are mere prentice work. *The Recruiting Officer* was produced at Drury Lane on the 8th April 1706 with instantaneous success. He was thus, at the age of twenty-eight, launched on an enterprise that promised a new era in English drama. He was prevailed upon to sell his military commission, and he wrote one more play, *The Beaux Stratagem*, before dying in abject poverty in the April of 1707.

It may seem puzzling that Farquhar, like Otway, should have died a pauper so soon after contributing a "winner" to the London stage. The London stage of those days did not command the resources of the modern West End, in which fortunes are made every year by crook playwrights. The income of these poor poets probably amounted to little more than the royalties of a "Little Theatre" playwright of our own time. It might have kept a man in vegetables and tobacco. Unfortunately, Otway had a landlord to consider, and Farquhar a wife and child in addition. And Farquhar, after disposing of his commission, seems, like Otway, to have had no other employment.

THE RECRUITING OFFICER

Characters

JUSTICE BALANCE, JUSTICE SCRUPLE, JUSTICE SCALE, *three Justices of the Peace*
MR. WORTHY, *a Gentleman of Shropshire*
CAPTAIN PLUME, CAPTAIN BRAZEN, *two Recruiting Officers*
SERJEANT KITE, *Serjeant to* CAPT. PLUME
BULLOCK, *a Country Clown, Brother to* ROSE
COSTAR PEARMAIN, THOMAS APPLETREE *two Recruits*
PLUCK, *a Butcher*
THOMAS, *a Smith*
MELINDA, *a Lady of fortune, beloved by* MR. WORTHY
SILVIA, *Daughter to* JUSTICE BALANCE, *in love with* CAPTAIN PLUME
LUCY, *Maid to* MELINDA
ROSE, *a Country Girl, Sister to* BULLOCK
STEWARD, DRUMMER, RECRUITS, CONSTABLES, WATCH, MOB, SERVANTS, *&c., &c.*

Scene—SHREWSBURY.

ACT I

SCENE I.—*The Market Place*

Enter DRUMMER, *beating the "Grenadier's March,"* SERJEANT KITE, COSTAR PEARMAIN, THOMAS APPLETREE, *and* MOB *following.*

KITE (*making a speech*) : If any gentleman soldiers, or others, have a mind to serve her majesty, and pull down the French king : if any prentices have severe masters, any children have undutiful parents : if any servants have too little wages, or any husband too much wife : let them repair to the noble serjeant Kite, at the sign of the Raven in this good town of Shrewsbury, and they shall receive present relief and entertainment.—Gentlemen, I don't beat my drums here to ensnare or inveigle any man ; for you must know, gentlemen, that I am a man of honour. Besides, I don't beat up for common soldiers ; no, I list only grenadiers, grenadiers, gentlemen.—Pray, gentlemen, observe this cap. This is the cap of honour, it dubs a man a gentleman in the drawing of a tricker ; and he that has the good fortune to be born six foot high, was born to be a great man.—(*To* COSTAR PEARMAIN.) Sir, will you give me leave to try this cap upon your head ?

PEAR. : Is there no harm in't ? won't the cap list me ?

KITE : No, no, no more than I can.—Come, let me see how it becomes you ?

PEAR. : Are you sure there be no conjuration in it? no gunpowder plot upon me?

KITE : No, no, friend ; don't fear, man.

PEAR. : My mind misgives me plaguily.—Let me see it. (*Going to put it on.*) It smells woundily of sweat and brimstone. Pray, serjeant, what writing is this upon the face of it ?

KITE : The crown, or the bed of honour.

PEAR. : Pray now, what may be that same bed of honour ?

KITE : Oh ! a mighty large bed ! bigger by half than the great bed of Ware—ten thousand people may lie in it together, and never feel one another.

PEAR. : My wife and I would do well to lie in't, for we don't care for feeling one another.—But do folk sleep sound in this same bed of honour ?

KITE : Sound ! ay, so sound that they never wake.

PEAR. : Wauns ! I wish again that my wife lay there.

KITE : Say you so ? then, I find, brother—

PEAR. : Brother ! hold there, friend ; I am no kindred to you that I know of yet. Look'ee, serjeant, no coaxing, no wheedling, d'ye see : if I have a mind to list, why so ; if not, why 'tis not so : therefore take your cap and your brothership back again, for I ain't disposed at this present writing.—No coaxing, no brothering me, faith !

KITE : I coax ! I wheedle ! I'm above it ! sir, I have served twenty campaigns. But, sir, you talk well, and I must own that you are a man every inch of you, a pretty young sprightly fellow. I love a fellow with a spirit; but I scorn to coax, 'tis base : though I must say, that never in my life have I seen a better built man ; how firm and strong he treads ! he steps like a castle ; but I scorn to wheedle any man.—Come, honest lad, will you take share of a pot ?

PEAR. : Nay, for that matter, I'll spend my penny with the best he that wears a head, that is, begging your pardon, sir, and in a fair way.

KITE : Give me your hand then ; and now, gentlemen, I have no more to say, but this—here's a purse of gold, and there is a tub of humming ale at my quarters : 'tis the queen's money, and the queen's drink.—She's a generous queen, and loves her subjects—I hope, gentlemen, you won't refuse the queen's health ?

MOB : No, no, no !

KITE : Huzza then ! huzza for the queen, and the honour of Shropshire !

MOB : Huzza !

KITE : Beat drum. [*Exeunt*, DRUMMER *beating the* "*Grenadier's March.*"

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

PLUME : By the Grenadier March, that should be my drum, and by that shout, it should beat with success.—Let me see—four o'clock.—(*Looking on his watch.*) At ten yesterday morning I left London.—A hundred and twenty miles in thirty hours is pretty smart riding, but nothing to the fatigue of recruiting.

Re-enter SERJEANT KITE.

KITE : Welcome to Shrewsbury, noble captain ! From the banks of the Danube to the Severn side, noble captain, you're welcome !

PLUME : A very elegant reception indeed, Mr. Kite ! I find you are fairly entered into your recruiting strain : pray, what success ?

KITE : I have been here but a week, and I have recruited five.

PLUME : Five ! pray what are they ?

KITE : I have listed the strong man of Kent, the king of the gipsies, a Scotch pedlar, a scoundrel attorney, and a Welsh parson.

PLUME : An attorney ! wert thou mad ? List a lawyer ! Discharge him, discharge him this minute.

KITE : Why, sir ?

PLUME : Because I will have nobody in my company that can write ; a fellow that can write, can draw petitions.—I say this minute discharge him.

KITE : And what shall I do with the parson ?

PLUME : Can he write ?

KITE : Hum ! he plays rarely upon the fiddle.

PLUME : Keep him by all means.—But how stands the country affected ? were the people pleased with the news of my coming to town ?

KITE : Sir, the mob are so pleased with your honour, and the justices and better sort of people are so delighted with me, that we shall soon do our business.—But, sir, you have got a recruit here that you little think of.

PLUME : Who ?

KITE : One that you beat up for last time you were in the country ; you remember your old friend Molly at the Castle ?

PLUME : She's not with child, I hope ?

KITE : No, no, sir—she was brought to bed yesterday.

PLUME : Kite, you must father the child.

KITE : And so her friends will oblige me to marry the mother !

PLUME : If they should, we'll take her with us ; she can wash, you know, and make a bed upon occasion.

KITE : Ay, or unmake it upon occasion. But your honour knows that I am married already.

PLUME : To how many ?

KITE : I can't tell readily—I have set them down here upon the back of the muster-roll.—(*Draws it out.*) Let me see,—*Imprimis*, Mrs. Sheely Snikereyes ; she sells potatoes upon Ormond Key in Dublin—Peggy Guzzle, the brandy-woman at the Horse-guard at Whitehall—Dolly Waggon, the carrier's daughter at Hull—Mademoiselle Van-Bottomflat at the Buss—Then Jenny Oakham, the ship-carpenter's widow, at Portsmouth ; but I don't reckon upon her, for she was married at the same time to two lieutenants of marines, and a man-of-war's boatswain.

PLUME : A full company !—You have named five—come, make 'em half-a-dozen, Kite. Is the child a boy or a girl ?

KITE : A chopping boy.

PLUME : Then set the mother down in your list, and the boy in mine : enter him a grenadier by the name of Francis Kite, absent upon furlough. I'll allow you a man's pay for his subsistence ; and now go comfort the wench in the straw.

KITE : I shall, sir.

PLUME : But hold ; have you made any use of your German doctor's habit since you arrived ?

KITE : Yes, yes, sir, and my fame's all about the country for the most famous fortune-teller that ever told a lie.—I was obliged to let my landlord into the secret, for the convenience of keeping it so ; but he's an honest fellow, and will be trusty to any roguery that is confided to him. This device, sir, will get you men, and me money, which, I think, is all we want at present.—But yonder comes your friend, Mr. Worthy.—Has your honour any farther commands ?

PLUME : None at present.—(*Exit* SERJEANT KITE.) 'Tis indeed the picture of Worthy, but the life's departed.

Enter MR. WORTHY.

What ! arms a-cross, Worthy ! Methinks, you should hold 'em open when a friend's so near.—The man has got the vapours in his ears, I believe : I must expel this melancholy spirit.

Spleen, thou worst of fiends below,
Fly, I conjure thee by this magic blow.
[*Slaps* MR. WORTHY *on the shoulder.*

WOR. : Plume ! my dear captain, welcome. Safe and sound returned ?

PLUME : I 'scaped safe from Germany, and sound, I hope, from London ; you see I have lost neither leg, arm, nor nose ; then for my inside, 'tis neither troubled with sympathies nor antipathies ; and I have an excellent stomach for roast beef.

WOR. : Thou art a happy fellow ; once I was so.

PLUME : What ails thee, man ? No inundations nor earthquakes in Wales, I hope ? Has your father rose from the dead, and reassumed his estate ?

WOR. : No.

PLUME : Then you are married surely ?

WOR. : No.

PLUME : Then you are mad, or turning quaker ?

WOR. : Come, I must out with it.—Your once gay, roving friend is dwindled into an obsequious, thoughtful, romantic, constant coxcomb.

PLUME : And, pray, what is all this for ?

WOR. : For a woman.

PLUME : Shake hands, brother ; if you go to that, behold me as obsequious, as thoughtful, and as constant a coxcomb as your worship.

WOR. : For whom ?

PLUME : For a regiment.—But for a woman !—'Sdeath ! I have been constant to fifteen at a time, but never melancholy for one ; and can the love of one bring you into this pickle ? Pray, who is this miraculous Helen ?

WOR. : A Helen indeed, not to be won under a ten years' siege, as great a beauty, and as great a jilt.

PLUME : A jilt ? pho ! is she as great a whore ?

WOR. : No, no.

PLUME : 'Tis ten thousand pities. But who is she ? do I know her ?

WOR. : Very well.

PLUME : Impossible !—I know no woman that will hold out a ten years' siege.

WOR. : What think you of Melinda ?

PLUME : Melinda ! why, she began to capitulate this time twelvemonth, and offered to surrender upon honourable terms ; and I advised you to propose a settlement of five hundred pounds a year to her, before I went last abroad.

WOR. : I did, and she hearkened to't, desiring only one week to consider : when, beyond her hopes, the town was relieved, and I forced to turn my siege into a blockade.

PLUME : Explain, explain !

WOR. : My lady Richly, her aunt, in Flintshire dies, and leaves her, at this critical time, twenty thousand pounds.

PLUME : Oh, the devil ! what a delicate woman was there spoiled ! But, by the rules of war now, Worthy, your blockade was foolish. After such a convoy of provisions was entered the place, you could have no thought of reducing it by famine ; you should have redoubled your attacks, taken the town by storm, or have died upon the breach.

WOR. : I did make one general assault, and pushed it with all my forces ; but I

was so vigorously repulsed, that, despairing of ever gaining her for a mistress, I have altered my conduct, given my addresses the obsequious and distant turn, and court her now for a wife.

PLUME : So as you grew obsequious, she grew haughty ; and because you approached her as a goddess, she used you like a dog ?

WOR. : Exactly.

PLUME : 'Tis the way of 'em all. Come, Worthy, your obsequious and distant airs will never bring you together ; you must not think to surmount her pride by your humility. Would you bring her to better thoughts of you, she must be reduced to a meaner opinion of herself. Let me see ; the very first thing that I would do, should be to lie with her chambermaid, and hire three or four wenches in the neighbourhood to report that I had got them with child. Suppose we lampooned all the pretty women in town, and left her out ? Or, what if we made a ball, and forgot to invite her with one or two of the ugliest ?

WOR. : These would be mortifications, I must confess ; but we live in such a precise, dull place, that we can have no balls, no lampoons, no—

PLUME : What ! no bastards ! and so many recruiting officers in town ! I thought 'twas a maxim among them to leave as many recruits in the country as they carried out.

WOR. : Nobody doubts your good-will, noble captain, in serving your country with your best blood ; witness our friend Molly at the Castle. There have been tears in town about that business, captain.

PLUME : I hope Silvia has not heard of 't ?

WOR. : O sir, have you thought of her ? I began to fancy you had forgot poor Silvia.

PLUME : Your affairs had put my own quite out of my head. 'Tis true, Silvia and I had once agreed to go to bed together, could we have adjusted preliminaries ; but she would have the wedding before consummation, and I was for consummation before the wedding ; we could not agree. She was a pert, obstinate fool, and would lose her maidenhead her own way, so she may keep it for Plume.

WOR. : But do you intend to marry upon no other conditions ?

PLUME : Your pardon, sir, I'll marry upon no conditions at all. If I should, I am resolved never to bind myself to a woman for my whole life, till I know whether I shall like her company for half an hour. Suppose I married a woman that wanted a leg ! such a thing might be, unless I examined the goods beforehand. If people would but try one another's constitutions before they engaged, it would prevent all these elopements, divorces, and the devil knows what.

WOR. : Nay, for that matter, the town did not stick to say, that—

PLUME : I hate country towns for that reason. If your town has a dishonourable thought of Silvia it deserves to be burned to the ground. I love Silvia, I admire her frank, generous disposition. There's something in that girl more than woman, her sex is but a foil to her. The ingratitude, dissimulation, envy, pride, avarice, and vanity of her sister females, do but set off their contraries in her. In short, were I once a general I would marry her.

WOR. : Faith, you have reason ; for were you but a corporal she would marry you. But my Melinda coquettes it with every fellow she sees. I'll lay fifty pound she makes love to you.

PLUME : I'll lay fifty pound that I return it, if she does. Look'ee, Worthy, I'll win her, and give her to you afterwards.

WOR. : If you win her you shall wear her, faith ; I would not give a fig for the contest without the credit of the victory.

Re-enter SERJEANT KITE.

KITE : Captain, captain, a word in your ear.

PLUME : You may speak out, here are none but friends.

KITE : You know, sir, that you sent me to comfort the good woman in the straw, Mrs. Molly—my wife, Mr. Worthy.

WOR. : O ho ! very well ! I wish you joy, Mr. Kite.

KITE : Your worship very well may, for I have got both a wife and a child in half an hour. But, as I was a-saying, you sent me to comfort Mrs. Molly, my wife I mean ; but what d'ye think, sir ? she was better comforted before I came.

PLUME : As how !

KITE : Why, sir, a footman in a blue livery had brought her ten guineas to buy her baby-clothes.

PLUME : Who, in the name of wonder, could send them ?

KITE : Nay, sir, I must whisper that—Mrs. Silvia. [*Whispers.*

PLUME : Silvia ! generous creature !

WOR. : Silvia ! impossible !

KITE : Here be the guineas, sir ; I took the gold as part of my wife's portion. Nay, farther, sir, she sent word that the child should be taken all imaginable care of, and that she intended to stand godmother. The same footman, as I was coming to you with this news, called after me, and told me, that his lady would speak with me. I went, and, upon hearing that you were come to town, she gave me half-a-guinea for the news ; and ordered me to tell you, that justice Balance, her father, who is just come out of the country, would be glad to see you.

PLUME : There's a girl for you, Worthy ! Is there anything of woman in this ? No, 'tis noble and generous, manly friendship. Show me another woman that would lose an inch of her prerogative, that way, without tears, fits, and reproaches ! The common jealousy of her sex, which is nothing but their avarice of pleasure, she despises ; and can part with the lover, though she dies for the man. Come, Worthy : where's the best wine? for there I'll quarter.

WOR. : Horton has a fresh pipe of choice Barcelona, which I would not let him pierce before, because I reserved the maidenhead of it for your welcome to town.

PLUME : Let's away then.—Mr. Kite, wait on the lady with my humble serivce, and tell her I shall only refresh a little, and wait upon her.

WOR. : Hold, Kite !—Have you seen the other recruiting-captain ?

KITE. : No, sir.

PLUME : Another ! who is he ?

WOR. : My rival in the first place, and the most unaccountable fellow—but I'll tell you more as we go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—MELINDA'S *Apartment.*

Enter MELINDA *and* SILVIA *meeting.*

MEL. : Welcome to town, cousin Silvia,—(*Salute.*) I envied you your retreat in the country ; for Shrewsbury, methinks, and all your heads of shires, are the most irregular places for living. Here we have smoke, noise, scandal, affectation, and pretension ; in short, everything to give the spleen—and nothing to divert it. Then the air is intolerable.

SILV. : O madam ! I have heard the town commended for its air.

MEL. : But you don't consider, Silvia, how long I have lived in't ! for I can assure you, that to a lady, the least nice in her constitution, no air can be good above half a year. Change of air I take to be the most agreeable of any variety in life.

SILV. : As you say, cousin Melinda, there are several sorts of airs.

MEL. : Psha ! I talk only of the air we breathe, or more properly of that we taste. Have not you, Silvia, found a vast difference in the taste of airs ?

SILV. : Pray, cousin, are not vapours a sort of air ? taste air ! you might as well tell me, I may feed upon air. But prithee, my dear Melinda, don't put on such an air to me. Your education and mine are just the same ; and I remember the time when we never troubled our heads about air, but when the sharp air from the Welsh mountains made our fingers ache in a cold morning at the boarding-school.

MEL. : Our education, cousin, was the same, but our temperaments had nothing alike ; you have the constitution of a horse.

SILV. : So far as to be troubled with neither spleen, colic, nor vapours ; I need no salts for my stomach, no hartshorn for my head, nor wash for my complexion ; I can gallop all the morning after the hunting-horn, and all the evening after a fiddle. In short, I can do everything with my father, but drink, and shoot flying ; and I am sure, I can do everything my mother could, were I put to the trial.

MEL. : You are in a fair way of being put to't ; for I am told your captain is come to town.

SILV. : Ay, Melinda, he is come, and I'll take care he shan't go without a companion.

MEL. : You are certainly mad, cousin !

SILV. : *And there's a pleasure sure, in being mad,*
Which none but madmen know.

MEL. : Thou poor romantic Quixote ! Hast thou the vanity to imagine that a young sprightly officer, that rambles over half the globe in half a year, can confine his thoughts to the little daughter of a country-justice, in an obscure corner of the world ?

SILV. : Psha ! what care I for his thoughts ? I should not like a man with confined thoughts, it shows a narrowness of soul. Constancy is but a dull sleepy quality at best, they will hardly admit it among the manly virtues ; nor do I think it deserves a place with bravery, knowledge, policy, justice, and some other qualities that are proper to that noble sex. In short, Melinda, I think a petticoat a mighty simple thing, and I am heartily tired of my sex.

MEL. : That is, you are tired of an appendix to our sex, that you can't so handsomely get rid of in petticoats, as if you were in breeches. O' my conscience, Silvia, hadst thou been a man, thou hadst been the greatest rake in Christendom.

SILV. : I should have endeavoured to know the world, which a man can never do thoroughly without half a hundred friendships, and as many amours. But now I think on't, how stands your affair with Mr. Worthy ?

MEL. : He's my aversion !

SILV. : Vapours !

MEL. : What do you say, madam ?

SILV. : I say, that you should not use that honest fellow so inhumanly. He's a gentleman of parts and fortune ; and besides that he's my Plume's friend, and by all that's sacred, if you don't use him better, I shall expect satisfaction.

MEL. : Satisfaction ! you begin to fancy yourself in breeches in good earnest. But to be plain with you, I like Worthy the worse for being so intimate with your captain, for I take him to be a loose, idle, unmannerly coxcomb.

SILV. : O madam ! you never saw him, perhaps, since you were mistress of twenty-thousand pound ; you only knew him when you were capitulating with Worthy for a settlement, which perhaps might encourage him to be a little loose, and unmannerly with you.

MEL. : What do you mean, madam ?

SILV. : My meaning needs no interpretation, madam.

MEL. : Better it had, madam ; for methinks you are too plain.

SILV. : If you mean the plainness of my person, I think your ladyship as plain as me to the full.

MEL. : Were I sure of that, I would be glad to take up with a rakehelly officer as you do.

SILV. : Again !—Look'ee, madam, you're in your own house.

MEL. : And if you had kept in yours, I should have excused you.

SILV. : Don't be troubled, madam, I shan't desire to have my visit returned.

MEL. : The sooner therefore you make an end of this the better.

SILV. : I am easily persuaded to follow my inclinations, so, madam, your humble servant. [*Exit.*

MEL. : Saucy thing !

Enter LUCY.

LUCY : What's the matter, madam ?

MEL. : Did you not see the proud nothing, how she swells upon the arrival of her fellow ?

LUCY : Her fellow has not been long enough arrived to occasion any great swelling, madam ; I don't believe she has seen him yet.

MEL. : Nor shan't if I can help it.—Let me see—I have it ! Bring me pen and ink.—Hold, I'll go write in my closet.

LUCY : An answer to this letter, I hope, madam. [*Presents a letter.*

MEL. : Who sent it ?

LUCY : Your captain, madam.

MEL. : He's a fool, and I am tired of him. Send it back unopened.

LUCY : The messenger's gone, madam.

MEL. : Then how shall I send an answer ? Call him back immediately, while I go write. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*A Room in* JUSTICE BALANCE'S *House.*

Enter JUSTICE BALANCE *and* CAPTAIN PLUME.

BAL. : Look'ee, captain, give us but blood for our money, and you shan't want men. I remember for that some years of the last war, we had no blood nor wounds, but in the officers' mouths ; nothing for our millions but newspapers not worth a reading. Our armies did nothing but play at prison bars, and hide and seek with the enemy ; but now ye have brought us colours, and standards, and prisoners. Ads my life, captain, get us but another mareschal of France, and I'll go myself for a soldier.

PLUME : Pray, Mr. Balance, how does your fair daughter ?

BAL. : Ah, captain ! what is my daughter to a mareshcal of France ? We're upon a nobler subject, I want to have a particular description of the battle of Hochstadt.

PLUME : The battle, sir, was a very pretty battle as one should desire to see, but we were all so intent upon victory, that we never minded the battle. All that I know of the matter is, our general commanded us to beat the French, and

we did so ; and if he pleases but to say the word, we'll do't again. But pray, sir, how does Mrs. Silvia ?

BAL. : Still upon Silvia ! For shame, captain ! you are engaged already, wedded to the war ; victory is your mistress, and 'tis below a soldier to think of any other.

PLUME : As a mistress, I confess, but as a friend, Mr. Balance.

BAL. : Come, come, captain, never mince the matter, would not you debauch my daughter if you could ?

PLUME : How, sir ! I hope she's not to be debauched.

BAL. : Faith, but she is, sir ; and any woman in England of her age and complexion, by a man of your youth and vigour. Look'ee, captain, once I was young, and once an officer as you are ; and I can guess at your thoughts now by what mine were then ; and I remember very well, that I would have given one of my legs to have deluded the daughter of an old plain country gentleman, as like me as I was then like you.

PLUME : But, sir, was that country gentleman your friend and benefactor ?

BAL. : Not much of that.

PLUME : There the comparison breaks : the favours, sir, that—

BAL. : Pho, I hate speeches ! If I have done you any service, captain, 'twas to please myself, for I love thee ; and if I could part with my girl you should have her as soon as any young fellow I know. But I hope you have more honour than to quit the service, and she more prudence than to follow the camp ; but she's at her own disposal, she has fifteen hundred pound in her pocket, and so—Silvia, Silvia ! [*Calls.*

Enter SILVIA.

SILV. : There are some letters, sir, come by the post from London ; I left them upon the table in your closet.

BAL. : And here is a gentleman from Germany.—(*Presents* CAPTAIN PLUME *to her.*) Captain, you'll excuse me, I'll go read my letters, and wait on you.

[*Exit.*

SILV. : Sir, you're welcome to England.

PLUME : You are indebted to me a welcome, madam, since the hopes of receiving it from this fair hand was the principal cause of my seeing England.

SILV. : I have often heard that soldiers were sincere, shall I venture to believe public report ?

PLUME : You may, when 'tis backed by private insurance : for I swear, madam, by the honour of my profession, that whatever dangers I went upon, it was with the hope of making myself more worthy of your esteem ; and if ever I had thoughts of preserving my life, 'twas for the pleasure of dying at your feet.

SILV. : Well, well, you shall die at my feet, or where you will ; but you know, sir, there is a certain will and testament to be made beforehand.

PLUME : My will, madam, is made already, and there it is ; (*Gives her a parchment.*) and if you please to open that parchment, which was drawn the evening before the battle of Blenheim, you will find whom I left my heir.

SILV. (*opens the will and reads*) : *Mrs. Silvia Balance.*—Well, Captain, this is a handsome and a substantial compliment ; but I can assure you, I am much better pleased with the bare knowledge of your intention, than I should have been in the possession of your legacy. But methinks, sir, you should have left something to your little boy at the Castle.

PLUME (*aside*) : That's home !—(*Aloud.*) My little boy ! Lack-a-day, madam, that alone may convince you 'twas none of mine. Why the girl, madam, is my serjeant's wife, and so the poor creature gave out that I was father, in hopes that my friends might support her in case of necessity—that was all madam.—My boy ! no, no, no.

Enter SERVANT.

SER. : Madam, my master has received some ill news from London, and desires to speak with you immediately, and he begs the captain's pardon, that he can't wait on him as he promised. [*Exit.*

PLUME : Ill news ! Heavens avert it, nothing could touch me nearer than to see that generous worthy gentleman afflicted. I'll leave you to comfort him, and be assured, that if my life and fortune can be any way serviceable to the father of my Silvia, she shall freely command both.

SILV. : The necessity must be very pressing that would engage me to endanger either. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the same.*

JUSTICE BALANCE *and* SILVIA *discovered.*

SILV. : Whilst there is life there is hope, sir ; perhaps my brother may recover.

BAL. : We have but little reason to expect it ; doctor Kilman acquaints me here, that before this comes to my hands, he fears I shall have no son.—Poor Owen !—But the decree is just, I was pleased with the death of my father, because he left me an estate, and now I'm punished with the loss of an heir to inherit mine. I must now look upon you as the only hopes of my family, and I expect that the augmentation of your fortune will give you fresh thoughts, and new prospects.

SILV. : My desire of being punctual in my obedience, requires, that you would be plain in your commands, sir.

BAL. : The death of your brother makes you sole heiress to my estate, which you know is about twelve hundred pounds a year. This fortune gives you a fair claim to quality and a title ; you must set a just value upon yourself, and, in plain terms, think no more of captain Plume.

SILV. : You have often commended the gentleman, sir.

BAL. : And I do so still ; he's a very pretty fellow ; but though I liked him well enough for a bare son-in-law, I don't approve of him for an heir to my estate and family. Fifteen hundred pounds indeed I might trust in his hands, and it might do the young fellow a kindness ; but, ods my life ! twelve hundred pounds a year would ruin him—quite turn his brain !—A captain of foot worth twelve hundred pounds a year ! 'tis a prodigy in nature. Besides this, I have five or six thousand pounds in woods upon my estate ; oh, that would make him stark mad ! For you must know, that all captains have mighty aversion to timber ; they can't endure to see trees standing. Then I should have some rogue of a builder, by the help of his damned magic art, transform my noble oaks and elms into cornices, portals, sashes, birds, beasts, and devils, to adorn some magotty, new-fashioned bauble upon the Thames ; and then you should have a dog of a gardener bring a *habeas corpus* for my *terra firma*, remove it to Chelsea or Twittenham, and clap it into grass-plats and gravel-walks.

Enter SERVANT.

SER. : Sir, here's one below with a letter for your worship, but he will deliver it into no hands but your own.

BAL. : Come, show me the messenger. [*Exit with* SERVANT.

SILV. : Make the dispute between love and duty, and I am prince Prettyman exactly. If my brother dies, ah poor brother ! if he lives, ah poor sister ! 'Tis bad both ways ; I'll try again. Follow my own inclinations, and break my father's heart ; or obey his commands, and break my own ? worse and worse. Suppose I take it thus ? a moderate fortune, a pretty fellow, and a pad ; or a fine estate, a coach-and-six, and an ass. That will never do neither.

Re-enter JUSTICE BALANCE *and* SERVANT.

BAL. (*to* SERVANT) : Put four horses into the coach.—(*Exit* SERVANT.) Silvia !

SILV. : Sir.

BAL. : How old were you when your mother died ?

SILV. : So young that I don't remember I ever had one ; and you have been so careful, so indulgent to me since, that indeed I never wanted one.

BAL. : Have I ever denied you anything you asked of me ?

SILV. : Never that I remember.

BAL. : Then, Sylvia, I must beg that, once in your life, you would grant me a favour.

SILV. : Why should you question it, sir ?

BAL. : I don't ; but I would rather counsel than command. I don't propose this with the authority of a parent, but as the advice of your friend ; that you would take the coach this moment, and go into the country.

SILV. : Does this advice proceed from the contents of the letter you received just now ?

BAL. : No matter ; I shall be with you in three or four days, and then give you my reasons. But before you go, I expect you will make me one solemn promise.

SILV. : Propose the thing, sir.

BAL. : That you will never dispose of yourself to any man without my consent.

SILV. : I promise.

BAL. : Very well ; and to be even with you, I promise that I will never dispose of you without your own consent ; and so, Silvia, the coach is ready ; farewell !—(*Leads her to the door, and returns.*) Now she's gone, I'll examine the contents of this letter a little nearer. [*Reads.*

Sir,

My intimacy with Mr. Worthy has drawn a secret from him that he had from his friend captain Plume ; and my friendship and relation to your family oblige me to give you timely notice of it : the captain has dishonourable designs upon my cousin Silvia. Evils of this nature are more easily prevented than amended ; and that you would immediately send my cousin into the country, is the advice of, sir, your humble servant,

MELINDA.

Why the devil's in the young fellows of this age ! they are ten times worse than they were in my time. Had he made my daughter a whore, and forswore it like a gentleman, I could have almost pardoned it ; but to tell tales beforehand is monstrous. Hang it, I can fetch down a woodcock or a snipe, and why not a hat and feather ? I have a case of good pistols, and have a good mind to try.

Enter MR. WORTHY.

Worthy, your servant.

WOR. : I'm sorry, sir, to be the messenger of ill news.

BAL. : I apprehend it, sir ; you have heard that my son Owen is past recovery.

WOR. : My advices say he's dead, sir.

BAL. : He's happy, and I'm satisfied. The strokes of Heaven I can bear, but injuries from men, Mr. Worthy, are not so easily supported.

WOR. : I hope, sir, you're under no apprehension of wrong from anybody ?

BAL. : You know I ought to be.

WOR. : You wrong my honour, sir, in believing I could know anything to your prejudice without resenting it as much as you should.

BAL. : This letter, sir, which I tear in pieces to conceal the person that sent it, informs me that Plume has a design upon Silvia, and that you are privy to't. [*Tears the letter.*

WOR. : Nay then, sir, I must do myself justice, and endeavour to find out the author.—(*Takes up a fragment of the letter.*) Sir, I know the hand, and if you refuse to discover the contents—Melinda shall tell me. [*Going.*

BAL. : Hold, sir ! the contents I have told you already, only with this circumstance, that her intimacy with Mr. Worthy had drawn the secret from him.

WOR. : Her intimacy with me !—Dear sir, let me pick up the pieces of this letter ; 'twill give me such a hank upon her pride, to have her own an intimacy under her hand.—(*Gathering up the letter.*) 'Twas the luckiest accident ! The aspersion, sir, was nothing but malice, the effect of a little quarrel between her and Mrs. Silvia.

BAL. : Are you sure of that, sir ?

WOR. : Her maid gave me the history of part of the battle just now, as she overheard it. But I hope, sir, your daughter has suffered nothing upon the account ?

BAL. : No, no, poor girl ; she's so afflicted with the news of her brother's death, that to avoid company she begged leave to be gone into the country.

WOR. : And is she gone ?

BAL. : I could not refuse her, she was so pressing ; the coach went from the door the minute before you came.

WOR. : So pressing to be gone, sir ! I find her fortune will give her the same airs with Melinda, and then Plume and I may laugh at one another.

BAL. : Like enough ; women are as subject to pride as we are, and why mayn't great women, as well as great men, forget their old acquaintance ? But come, where's this young fellow ? I love him so well, it would break the heart of me to think him a rascal.—(*Aside.*) I'm glad my daughter's gone fairly off though.—(*Aloud.*) Where does the captain quarter ?

WOR. : At Horton's ; I'm to meet him there two hours hence, and we should be glad of your company.

BAL. : Your pardon, dear Worthy ; I must allow a day or two to the death of my son : the decorum of mourning is what we owe the world, because they pay it to us afterwards. I'm yours over a bottle, or how you will.

WOR. : Sir, I'm your humble servant. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.—*A Street.*

Enter SERJEANT KITE, *leading* COSTAR PEARMAIN *in one hand, and* THOMAS APPLETREE *in the other, both drunk.*

SERJEANT KITE *sings.*

Our prentice Tom may now refuse
To wipe his scoundrel master's shoes ;
For now he's free to sing and play—
Over the hills and far away.

Chorus. Over the hills, and over the main,
To Flanders, Portugal, or Spain ;
The queen commands, and we'll obey—
Over the hills and far away.

We all shall lead more happy lives,
By getting rid of brats and wives,
That scold and brawl both night and day—
Over the hills and far away.

Chorus. Over the hills, &c.

Hey, boys ! thus we soldiers live ; drink, sing, dance, play ! We live, as one should say—we live—'tis impossible to tell how we live. We are all princes. Why—why, you are a king—you are an emperor, and I'm a prince. Now—an't we—

APPLE. : No, serjeant, I'll be no emperor.

KITE : No !

APPLE. : No, I'll be a justice of peace.

KITE. : A justice of peace, man !

APPLE : Ay, wauns will I ; for since this pressing act, they are greater than any emperor under the sun.

KITE : Done ! you are a justice of peace, and you are a king, and I am a duke ; and a rum duke, an't I ?

PEAR. : Ay, but I'll be no king.

KITE : What then ?

PEAR. : I'll be a queen.

KITE : A queen !

PEAR. : Ay, queen of England ; that's greater than any king of 'em all.

KITE : Bravely said, faith ! Huzza for the queen !— (*Huzza.*) But hark'ee, you Mr. Justice, and you Mr. Queen, did you ever see the queen's picture ?

BOTH : No ! no ! no !

KITE : I wonder at that ; I have two of 'em set in gold, and as like her majesty, God bless the mark !—See here, they are set in gold.

Takes two broad-pieces out of his pocket, and gives one to each.

APPLE. : The wonderful works of Nature ! [*Looking at it.*

PEAR. : What's this written about ? Here's a posy, I believe,—*Ca-ro-lus.*—What's that, serjeant ?

KITE : Oh, Carolus !—Why, Carolus is Latin for queen Anne,—that's all.

PEAR : 'Tis a fine thing to be a scollard !—Serjeant, will you part with this ? I'll buy it on you, if it come within the compass of a crown.

KITE : A crown ! never talk of buying ; 'tis the same thing among friends, you know ; I present them to ye both : you shall give me as good a thing. Put 'em up, and remember your old friend, when I am—*Over the hills and far away !* [*They sing and put up the money.*

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME, *singing.*

PLUME : *Over the hills and over the main,*
To Flanders, Portugal, or Spain ;
The queen commands, and we'll obey,
Over the hills and far away.

Come on, my men of mirth, away with it, I'll make one among ye.—Who are these hearty lads ?

KITE : Off with your hats ; 'ounds, off with your hats ! This is the captain, the captain.

APPLE. : We have seen captains afore now, mun.

PEAR. : Ay, and lieutenant-captains too ; flesh ; I'se keep on my nab !

APPLE. : And I'se scarcely doff mine for any captain in England. My vether's a freeholder.

PLUME : Who are these jolly lads, serjeant ?

KITE : A couple of honest brave fellows, that are willing to serve the queen : I have entertained 'em just now as volunteers under your honour's command.

PLUME : And good entertainment they shall have. Volunteers are the men I want, those are the men fit to make soldiers, captains, generals !

PEAR. : Wauns, Tummas, what's this ! are you listed ?

APPLE. : Flesh, not I : are you, Costar ?

PEAR. : Wauns, not I !

KITE : What, not listed ! Ha ! ha ! ha ! a very good jest i'faith !

PEAR. : Come, Tummas, we'll go home.

APPLE. : Ay, ay, come.

KITE : Home ! for shame, gentlemen, behave yourselves better before your captain ! Dear Tummas, honest Costar—

APPLE. : No, no, we'll be gone.

KITE : Nay, then, I command you to stay : I place you both sentinels in this place for two hours to watch the motion of St. Mary's clock, you ; and you the motion of St. Chad's : and he that dares stir from his post till he be relieved, shall have my sword in his guts the next minute.

PLUME : What's the matter, serjeant ? I'm afraid you are too rough with these gentlemen.

KITE : I'm too mild, sir : they disobey command, sir, and one of 'em should be shot for an example to the other.

PEAR. : Shot, Tummas !

PLUME : Come, gentlemen, what's the matter ?

PEAR. : We don't know ; the noble serjeant is pleased to be in a passion, sir—but—

KITE : They disobey command ; they deny their being listed.

APPLE. : Nay, serjeant, we don't downright deny it neither ; that we dare not do, for fear of being shot : but we humbly conceive in a civil way, and begging your worship's pardon, that we may go home.

PLUME : That's easily known. Have either of you received any of the queen's money ?

PEAR. : Not a brass farthing, sir.

KITE : Sir, they have each of them received three-and-twenty shillings and sixpence, and 'tis now in their pockets.

PEAR. : Wauns, if I have a penny in my pocket but a bent sixpence, I'll be content to be listed, and shot into the bargain !

APPLE. : And I. Look ye here, sir.

PEAR. : Ay, here's my stock too : nothing but the queen's picture, that the serjeant gave me just now.

KITE : See there, a broad-piece ! three-and-twenty shillings and sixpence ; t'other has the fellow on't.

PLUME : The case is plain, gentlemen, the goods are found upon you. Those pieces of gold are worth three-and-twenty and sixpence each.

[*Whispers* SERJEANT KITE.

PEAR. : So it seems, that *Carolus* is three-and-twenty shillings and sixpence in Latin.

APPLE. : 'Tis the same thing in Greek, for we are listed.

PEAR : Flesh, but we an't, Tummas !—I desire to be carried before the mayor, captain.

PLUME (*aside to* KITE) : 'Twill never do, Kite—your damned tricks will ruin me at last.—I won't lose the fellows though, if I can help it.—(*Aloud.*) Well, gentlemen, there must be some trick in this : my serjeant offers here to take his oath that you are fairly listed.

APPLE. : Why, captain, we know that you soldiers have more liberty of conscience than other folks ; but for me or neighbour Costar here, to take such an oath, 'twould be a downright perjuration.

PLUME (*to* KITE) : Look'ee, you rascal ! you villain ! if I find that you have imposed upon these two honest fellows, I'll trample you to death, you dog ! Come, how was't ?

APPLE. : Nay, then, we will speak. Your serjeant, as you say, is a rogue, begging your worship's pardon—and—

PEAR. : Nay, Tummas, let me speak ; you know I can read.—And so, sir, he gave us those two pieces of money for pictures of the queen, by way of a present.

PLUME : How ! by way of a present ! The son of a whore ! I'll teach him to abuse honest fellows like you !—Scoundrel, rogue, villain !

[*Beats off* SERJEANT KITE, *and follows.*

BOTH : O brave noble captain ! Huzza ! a brave captain, faith !

PEAR. : Now, Tummas, *Carolus* is Latin for a beating. This is the bravest captain I ever saw.—Wauns, I have a month's mind to go with him !

Re-enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

PLUME : A dog, to abuse two such pretty fellows as you !—Look'ee, gentlemen, I love a pretty fellow : I come among you as an officer to list soldiers, not as a kidnapper, to steal slaves.

PEAR. : Mind that, Tummas.

PLUME : I desire no man to go with me but as I went myself : I went a volunteer, as you, or you, may do ; for a little time carried a musket, and now I command a company.

APPLE. : Mind that, Costar.—A sweet gentleman !

PLUME : 'Tis true, gentlemen, I might take an advantage of you ; the queen's money was in your pockets, my serjeant was ready to take his oath you were listed ; but I scorn to do a base thing, you are both of you at your liberty.

PEAR. : Thank you, noble captain.—Ecod, I can't find in my heart to leave him, he talks so finely.

APPLE. : Ay, Costar, would he always hold in this mind.

PLUME : Come, my lads, one thing more I'll tell you : you're both young tight fellows, and the army is the place to make you men for ever : every man has his lot, and you have yours. What think you now of a purse full of French gold out of a monsieur's pocket, after you have dashed out his brains with the but of your firelock, eh ?

PEAR. : Wauns ! I'll have it, captain—give me a shilling, I'll follow you to the end of the world.

APPLE. : Nay, dear Costar, do'na ; be advised.

PLUME : Here, my hero, here are two guineas for thee, as earnest of what I'll do farther for thee.

APPLE. : Do'na take it, do'na, dear Costar !

[*Cries, and pulls back his arm.*

PEAR. : I wull ! I wull !—Wauns, my mind gives me, that I shall be a captain myself.—I take your money, sir, and now I am a gentleman.

PLUME : Give me thy hand, and now you and I will travel the world o'er, and command wherever we tread.—(*Aside to* COSTAR PEARMAIN.) Bring your friend with you, if you can.

PEAR. : Well, Tummas, must we part ?

APPLE. : No, Costar, I canno leave thee.—Come, captain, I'll e'en go along too ; and if you have two honester simpler lads in your company, than we twa been, I'll say no more.

PLUME : Here, my lad.—(*Gives him money.*) Now your name ?

APPLE. : Tummas Appletree.

PLUME : And yours ?

PEAR. : Costar Pearmain.

PLUME : Born where ?

APPLE. : Both in Herefordshire.

PLUME : Very well ; courage, my lads !—Now we'll sing, *Over the hills and fa away.* [*Sings.*

Courage, boys, 'tis one to ten,
But we return all gentlemen ;
While conquering colours we display,
Over the hills and far away.
Over the hills, &c. [*Exeunt singing.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—*The Market-Place.*

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME *and* MR. WORTHY.

WOR. : I cannot forbear admiring the equality of our two fortunes. We love two ladies, they met us half way, and just as we were upon the point o leaping into their arms, fortune drops into their laps, pride possesses thei hearts, a maggot fills their heads, madness takes 'em by the tails ; they snort kick up their heels, and away they run.

PLUME : And leave us here to mourn upon the shore—a couple of poor melan choly monsters.—What shall we do ?

WOR. : I have a trick for mine ; the letter, you know, and the fortune-teller.

PLUME : And I have a trick for mine.

WOR. : What is't ?

PLUME : I'll never think of her again.

WOR. : No !

PLUME : No ; I think myself above administering to the pride of any woman, were she worth twelve thousand a year, and I han't the vanity to believe I shall ever gain a lady worth twelve hundred. The generous good-natured Silvia in her smock I admire, but the haughty scornful Silvia, with her fortune, I despise. [*Sings.*

Come, fair one, be kind ;
You never shall find
A fellow so fit for a lover :
The world shall view
My passion for you,
But never your passion discover.

I still will complain
Of your frowns and disdain,
Though I revel through all your charms :
The world shall declare,
That I die with despair,
When I only die in your arms.

I still will adore,
And love more and more,
But, by Jove, if you chance to prove cruel,
I'll get me a miss
That freely will kiss,
Though I afterwards drink water-gruel.

What, sneak out o' town, and not so much as a word, a line, a compliment ! 'Sdeath, how far off does she live ? I'll go and break her windows.

WOR. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! ay, and the window-bars too to come at her. Come, come, friend, no more of your rough military airs.

Enter SERJEANT KITE.

KITE : Captain ! sir ! look yonder, she's a-coming this way : 'tis the prettiest, cleanest, little tit !

PLUME : Now, Worthy, to show you how much I am in love.—Here she comes ; and what is that great country fellow with her ?

KITE : I can't tell, sir.

Enter ROSE, *a basket on her arm, and* BULLOCK.

ROSE : Buy chickens ! young and tender ! young and tender chickens !

PLUME : Here, you chickens !

ROSE : Who calls ?

PLUME : Come hither, pretty maid.

ROSE : Will you please to buy, sir ?

WOR. : Yes, child, we'll both buy.

PLUME : Nay, Worthy, that's not fair, market for yourself.—Come, child, I'll buy all you have.

ROSE : Then all I have is at your sarvice. [*Curtsies.*

WOR. : Then I must shift for myself, I find. [*Exit.*

PLUME : Let me see ; young and tender you say ? [*Chucks her under the chin.*

ROSE : As ever you tasted in your life, sir.

PLUME : Come, I must examine your basket to the bottom, my dear.

ROSE : Nay, for that matter, put in your hand ; feel, sir ; I warrant my ware as good as any in the market.

PLUME : And I'll buy it all, child, were it ten times more.

ROSE : Sir, I can furnish you.

PLUME : Come then, we won't quarrel about the price, they're fine birds.—Pray what's your name, pretty creature ?

ROSE : Rose, sir. My father is a farmer within three short mile o' the town ; we keep this market ; I sell chickens, eggs, and butter, and my brother Bullock there sells corn.

BULL. : Come, sister, haste ye, we shall be leat a hoame.

[*Whistles about the stage.*

PLUME : Kite !—(*Tips him the wink, he returns it.*) Pretty Mrs. Rose—you have, let me see—how many ?

ROSE : A dozen, sir, and they are richly worth a crawn.

BULL. : Come, Ruose, Ruose ! I sold fifty strake o' barley to-day in half this time ; but you will higgle and higgle for a penny more than the commodity is worth.

ROSE : What's that to you, oaf ? I can make as much out of a groat as you can out of fourpence, I'm sure. The gentleman bids fair, and when I meet with a chapman I know how to make the best on him : and so, sir, I say, for a crawn-piece, the bargain's yours.

PLUME : Here's a guinea, my dear.

ROSE : I can't change your money, sir.

PLUME : Indeed, indeed, but you can : my lodging is hard by, you shall bring home the chickens, and we'll make change there.

[*Goes off,* ROSE *follows him.*

KITE : So, sir, as I was telling you, I have seen one of these hussars eat up a ravelin for his breakfast, and afterwards pick his teeth with a palisado.

BULL. : Ay, you soldiers see very strange things. But pray, sir, what is a ravelin ?

KITE : Why, 'tis like a modern minced pie, but the crust is confounded hard, and the plums are somewhat hard of digestion.

BULL. : Then your palisado, pray what may he be ?—Come, Ruose, pray ha' done.

KITE : Your palisado is a pretty sort of bodkin, about the thickness of my leg.

BULL. (*aside*) : That's a fib, I believe.—(*Aloud.*) Eh ! where's Ruose ? Ruose ! Ruose ! 'sflesh, where's Ruose gone ?

KITE : She's gone with the captain.

BULL. : The captain ! wauns, there's no pressing of women, sure ?

KITE : But there is, sir.

BULL. : If the captain should press Ruose I should be ruined ! Which way went she ? Oh, the devil take your rablins and palisadoes ! [*Exit.*

KITE : You shall be better acquainted with them, honest Bullock, or I shall miss of my aim.

Re-enter MR. WORTHY.

WOR. : Why, thou art the most useful fellow in nature to your captain ; admirable in your way, I find.

KITE : Yes, sir, I understand my business, I will say it.—You must know, sir, I was born a gipsy, and bred among that crew till I was ten year old. There I learned canting and lying. I was bought from my mother, Cleopatra, by a certain nobleman for three pistoles ; who, liking my beauty, made me his page ; there I learned impudence and pimping. I was turned off for wearing my lord's linen, and drinking my lady's ratafia ; and then turned bailiff's follower : there I learned bullying and swearing. I at last got into the army, and there I learned whoring and drinking : so that if your worship pleases to cast up the whole sum, viz. canting, lying, impudence, pimping, bullying, swearing, whoring, drinking and a halberd, you will find the sum total amount to a recruiting serjeant.

WOR. : And pray, what induced you to turn soldier ?

KITE : Hunger and ambition, the fears of starving, and hopes of a truncheon, led me along to a gentleman, with a fair tongue and a fair periwig, who loaded me with promises ; but egad, it was the lightest load that ever I felt in my life. He promised to advance me, and indeed he did so—to a garret in the Savoy. I asked him why he put me in prison ; he called me lying dog, and said I was in garrison ; and, indeed, 'tis a garrison that may hold out till doomsday before I should desire to take it again. But here comes justice Balance.

Enter JUSTICE BALANCE *and* BULLOCK.

BAL. : Here, you serjeant, where's your captain ? Here's a poor foolish fellow comes clamouring to me with a complaint that your captain has pressed his sister.—Do you know anything of this matter, Worthy ?

WOR. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! I know his sister is gone with Plume to his lodging, to sell him some chickens.

BAL. : Is that all ? the fellow's a fool.

BULL. : I know that, an't please you ; but if your worship pleases to grant me a warrant to bring her before you, for fear of the worst.

BAL. : Thou'rt mad, fellow, thy sister's safe enough.

KITE : I hope so too. [*Aside.*

WOR. : Hast thou no more sense, fellow, than to believe that the captain can list women ?

BULL. : I know not whether they list them, or what they do with them, but, I am sure, they carry as many women as men with them out of the country.

BAL. : But how came you not to go along with your sister ?

BULL. : Luord, sir, I thought no more of her going than I do of the day I shall die ; but this gentleman here, not suspecting any hurt neither, I believe—(*To* KITE.) You thought no harm, friend, did ye ?

KITE : Lackaday, sir, not I !—(*Aside.*) Only that, I believe, I shall marry her to-morrow.

BAL. : I begin to smell powder.—Well, friend, but what did that gentleman with you ?

BULL. : Why, sir, he entertained me with a fine story of a great fight between the Hungarians, I think it was, and the Irish ; and so, sir, while we were in the heat of the battle—the captain carried off the baggage.

BAL. : Serjeant, go along with this fellow to your captain, give him my humble service, and I desire him to discharge the wench, though he has listed her.

BULL. : Ay, and if he ben't free for that, he shall have another man in her place.

KITE : Come, honest friend—(*Aside.*) You shall go to my quarters instead of the captain's. [*Exit with* BULLOCK.

BAL. : We must get this mad captain his complement of men, and send him a-packing, else he'll overrun the country.

WOR. : You see, sir, how little he values your daughter's disdain !

BAL. : I like him the better ; I was just such another fellow at his age. I never set my heart upon any woman so much as to make myself uneasy at the disappointment ; but what was very surprising both to myself and friends, I changed o'th' sudden, from the most fickle lover to the most constant husband in the world. But how goes your affair with Melinda ?

WOR. : Very slowly. Cupid had formerly wings, but I think, in this age, he goes upon crutches ; or, I fancy Venus has been dallying with her cripple Vulcan when my amour commenced, which has made it go on so lamely ; my mistress has got a captain too, but such a captain ! As I live, yonder he comes !

BAL. : Who ? that bluff fellow in the sash ! I don't know him.

WOR. : But I engage he knows you, and everybody at first sight : his impudence were a prodigy, were not his ignorance proportionable. He has the most universal acquaintance of any man living ; for he won't be alone, and nobody will keep him company twice. Then he's a Cæsar among the women, *Veni, vidi, vici*, that's all : if he has but talked with the maid, he swears he has lain with the mistress. But the most surprising part of his character is his memory, which is the most prodigious and the most trifling in the world.

BAL. : I have met with such men ; and I take this good-for-nothing memory to proceed from a certain contexture of the brain, which is purely adapted to impertinencies, and there they lodge secure, the owner having no thoughts of his own to disturb them. I have known a man as perfect as a chronologer, as to the day and year of most important transactions, but be altogether ignorant of the causes, springs, or consequences of any one thing of moment. I have known another acquire so much by travel, as to tell you the names of most places in Europe, with their distances of miles, leagues, or hours, as punctually as a postboy ; but for anything else, as ignorant as the horse that carries the mail.

WOR. : This is your man, sir, add but the traveller's privilege of lying ; and even that he abuses. This is the picture, behold the life !

Enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

BRAZ. : Mr. Worthy, I am your servant, and so forth.—Heark'ee, my dear.

WOR. : Whispering, sir, before company is not manners, and when nobody's by 'tis foolish.

BRAZ. : Company ! *Mort de ma vie !* I beg the gentleman's pardon ; who is he ?

WOR. : Ask him.

BRAZ. : So I will.—My dear, I am your servant, and so forth—your name, my dear ?

BAL. : Very laconic, sir !

BRAZ. : Laconic ! a very good name, truly ; I have known several of the Laconics abroad.—Poor Jack Laconic ! he was killed at the battle of Landen. I remember that he had a blue ribbon in his hat that very day, and after he fell, we found a piece of neat's tongue in his pocket.

BAL. : Pray, sir, did the French attack us, or we them, at Landen ?

BRAZ. : The French attack us ! Oons, sir, are you a Jacobite ?

BAL. : Why that question ?

BRAZ. : Because none but a Jacobite could think that the French durst attack us. No, sir, we attacked them on the—I have reason to remember the time, for I had two-and-twenty horses killed under me that day.

WOR. : Then, sir, you must have rid mighty hard.

BAL. : Or perhaps, sir, like my countryman, you rid upon a half-a-dozen horses at once.

BRAZ. : What do you mean, gentlemen ! I tell you they were killed, all torn to pieces by cannon-shot, except six I staked to death upon the enemies *chevaux-de-frise*.

BAL. : Noble captain, may I crave your name !

BRAZ. Brazen, at your service.

BAL. : Oh, Brazen, a very good name ; I have known several of the Brazens abroad.

WOR. : Do you know captain Plume, sir ?

BRAZ. : Is he anything related to Frank Plume in Northamptonshire ?—Honest Frank ! many, many a dry bottle have we cracked hand to fist. You must have known his brother Charles that was concerned in the India company, he married the daughter of old Tonguepad, the master in chancery, a very pretty woman, only squinted a little. She died in childbed of her first child ; but the child survived, 'twas a daughter, but whether 'twas called Margaret or Margery, upon my soul, I can't remember.—(*Looking on his watch.*) But, gentlemen, I must meet a lady, a twenty thousand pounder, presently, upon the walk by the water.—Worthy, your servant.—Laconic, yours. [*Exit.*

BAL. : If you can have so mean an opinion of Melinda as to be jealous of this fellow, I think she ought to give you cause to be so.

WOR. : I don't think she encourages him so much for gaining herself a lover, as to set me up a rival. Were there any credit to be given to his words, I should believe Melinda had made him this assignation. I must go see ; sir, you'll pardon me.

BAL. : Ay, ay, sir, you're a man of business.—(*Exit* MR. WORTHY.) But what have we got here ?

Re-enter ROSE, *singing.*

ROSE : And I shall be a lady, a captain's lady and ride single upon a white horse with a star, upon a velvet side-saddle ; and I shall go to London, and see the tombs, and the lions, and the queen.—Sir, an please your worship, I have often seen your worship ride through our grounds a-hunting, begging your worship's pardon—pray what may this lace be worth a yard.

[*Showing some lace.*

BAL. : Right Mechlin, by this light ! Where did you get this lace, child ?

ROSE : No matter for that, sir, I came honestly by it.

BAL. : I question it much.

ROSE : And see here, sir, a fine Turkey-shell snuff-box, and fine mangery, see here.—(*Takes snuff affectedly.*) The captain learned me how to take it with an air.

BAL. : Oho ! the captain ! now the murder's out. And so the captain taught you to take it with an air ?

ROSE : Yes, and give it with an air too.—Will your worship please to taste my snuff ? [*Offers the box affectedly.*

BAL. : You are a very apt scholar, pretty maid. And pray, what did you give the captain for these fine things ?

ROSE : He's to have my brother for a soldier, and two or three sweethearts that I have in the country, they shall all go with the captain. Oh, he's the finest man, and the humblest withal ! Would you believe it, sir, he carried me up with him to his own chamber, with as much fam-mam-mill-yara-rality as if I had been the best lady in the land !

BAL. : Oh ! he's a mighty familiar gentleman, as can be.

ROSE : But I must beg your worship's pardon, I must go seek out my brother Bullock. [*Runs off singing.*

BAL. : If all officers took the same method of recruiting with this gentleman, they might come in time to be fathers as well as captains of their companies.

[*Re-enter* CAPTAIN PLUME *singing, with his arm round* ROSE.

PLUME : *But it is not so*
With those that go,
Through frost and snow.
Most apropos,
My maid with the milking-pail.

—(*Aside.*) How the justice ! then I'm arraigned, condemned, and executed.

BAL. : Oh, my noble captain !

ROSE : And my noble captain too, sir.

PLUME : (*Aside to* ROSE.) 'Sdeath, child ! are you mad ?—(*Aloud.*) Mr. Balance, I am so full of business about my recruits, that I han't a moment's time to—I have just now three or four people to—

BAL. : Nay, captain, I must speak to you.

ROSE. : And so must I too, captain.

PLUME : Any other time, sir—I cannot for my life, sir—

BAL. : Pray, sir—

PLUME : Twenty thousand things—I would—but now, sir, pray—devil take me —I cannot—I must— [*Breaks away.*

BAL. : Nay, I'll follow you. [*Exit.*

ROSE : And I too. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A walk by the Severn.*

Enter MELINDA *and* LUCY.

MEL. : And pray, was it a ring, or buckle, or pendants, or knots ? or, in what shape was the almighty gold transformed, that has bribed you so much in his favour ?

LUCY : Indeed, madam, the last bribe I had was from the captain, and that was only a small piece of Flanders edging for pinners.

MEL. : Ay, Flanders lace is as constant a present from officers to their women, as something else is from their women to them. They every year bring over a cargo of lace, to cheat the queen of her duty, and her subjects of their honesty.

LUCY : They only barter one sort of prohibited goods for another, madam.

MEL. : Has any of 'em been bartering with you, Mrs. Pert, that you talk so like a trader ?

LUCY : Madam, you talk as peevishly to me, as if it were my fault ; the crime is none of mine, though I pretend to excuse it : though he should not see you this week, can I help it ? But as I was saying, madam—his friend, captain Plume, has so taken him up these two days.

MEL. : Psha ! would his friend, the captain, were tied upon his back ! I warrant, he has never been sober since that confounded captain came to town. The devil take all officers, I say ! they do the nation more harm by debauching us at home, than they do good by defending us abroad. No sooner a captain comes to town, but all the young fellows flock about him, and we can't keep a man to ourselves.

LUCY : One would imagine, madam, by your concern for Worthy's absence, that you should use him better when he's with you.

MEL. : Who told you, pray, that I was concerned for his absence ? I'm only vexed that I've had nothing said to me these two days. One may like the love, and despise the lover, I hope ; as one may love the treason, and hate the traitor. Oh, here comes another captain, and a rogue that has the confidence to make love to me ; but, indeed, I don't wonder at that, when he has the assurance to fancy himself a fine gentleman.

LUCY : If he should speak o' th' assignation, I should be ruined. [*Aside.*

Enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

BRAZ. (*Aside.*) True to the touch, faith !—(*Aloud.*) Madam, I am your humble servant, and all that, madam.—A fine river this same Severn.—Do you love fishing, madam ?

MEL. : 'Tis a pretty melancholy amusement for lovers.

BRAZ. : I'll go buy hooks and lines presently ; for you must know, madam, that I have served in Flanders against the French, in Hungary against the Turks, and in Tangier against the Moors, and I was never so much in love before ; and split me, madam, in all the campaigns I ever made, I have not seen so fine a woman as your ladyship.

MEL. : And from all the men I ever saw, I never had so fine a compliment ; but you soldiers are the best bred men, that we must allow.

BRAZ. : Some of us, madam.—But there are brutes among us too, very sad brutes ; for my own part, I have always had the good luck to prove agreeable.—I have had very considerable offers, madam—I might have married a German princess, worth fifty thousand crowns a year, but her stove disgusted me.—The daughter of a Turkish bashaw fell in love with me too, when I was prisoner among the Infidels ; she offered to rob her father of his treasure, and make her escape with me ; but I don't know how, my time was not come ; hanging and marriage, you know, go by destiny ; fate has reserved me for a Shropshire lady with twenty thousand pound.—Do you know any such person, madam ?

MEL. (*aside*) : Extravagant coxcomb !—(*Aloud.*) To be sure, a great many ladies of that fortune would be proud of the name of Mrs. Brazen.

BRAZ. : Nay, for that matter, madam, there are women of very good quality of the name of Brazen.

Enter MR. WORTHY.

MEL. (*aside*) : Oh, are you there, gentleman ?—(*Aloud.*) Come, captain, we'll walk this way, give me your hand.

BRAZ. : My hand, heart's blood, and guts are at your service.—Mr. Worthy, your servant, my dear. [*Exit, leading* MELINDA, LUCY *following.*

WOR. : Death and fire, this is not to be borne !

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

PLUME : No more it is, faith.
WOR. : What ?
PLUME : The March beer at the Raven. I have been doubly serving the queen—raising men, and raising the excise. Recruiting and elections are rare friends to the excise.
WOR. : You an't drunk ?
PLUME : No, no, whimsical only ; I could be mighty foolish, and fancy myself mighty witty. Reason still keeps its throne, but it nods a little, that's all.
WOR. : Then you're just fit for a frolic.
PLUME : As fit as close pinners for a punk in the pit.
WOR. : There's your play then, recover me that vessel from that Tangerine.
PLUME : She's well rigged, but how is she manned ?
WOR. : By captain Brazen, that I told you of to-day. She is called the Melinda, a first rate, I can assure you ; she sheered off with him just now, on purpose to affront me ; but according to your advice I would take no notice, because I would seem to be above a concern for her behaviour.—But have a care of a quarrel.
PLUME : No, no, I never quarrel with anything in my cups but an oyster wench, or a cookmaid ; and if they ben't civil, I knock 'em down. But heark'ee, my friend, I'll make love, and I must make love. I tell you what, I'll make love like a platoon.
WOR. : Platoon, how's that ?
PLUME : I'll kneel, stoop, and stand, faith ; most ladies are gained by platooning.
WOR. : Here they come ; I must leave you. [*Exit.*
PLUME : So ! now must I look as sober and as demure as a whore at a christening.

Re-enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN *and* MELINDA.

BRAZ. : Who's that, madam ?
MEL. : A brother officer of yours, I suppose, sir.
BRAZ. : Ay !—(*To* PLUME.) My dear !
PLUME : My dear ! [*Run and embrace.*
BRAZ. : My dear boy, how is't ? Your name, my dear ? If I be not mistaken, I have seen your face.
PLUME : I never saw yours in my life, my dear.—But there's a face well known, as the sun's that shines on all, and is by all adored.
BRAZ. : Have you any pretensions, sir ?
PLUME : Pretensions !
BRAZ. : That is, sir, have you ever served abroad ?
PLUME : I have served at home, sir, for ages served this cruel fair—and that will serve the turn, sir.
MEL. : So, between the fool and the rake I shall bring a fine spot of work upon my hands !—I see Worthy yonder—I could be content to be friends with him, would he come this way. [*Aside.*
BRAZ. : Will you fight for the lady, sir ?
PLUME : No, sir, but I'll have her notwithstanding.

Thou peerless princess of Salopian plains,
Envied by nymphs, and worshipp'd by the swains !

BRAZ. : Oons, sir, not fight for her !
PLUME : Prithee be quiet—I shall be out—

Behold, how humbly does the Severn glide,
To greet thee princess of the Severn side !

BRAZ. : Don't mind him, madam.—If he were not so well dressed, I should take him for a poet.—But I'll show the difference presently.—Come, madam —we'll place you between us ; and now the longest sword carries her.

[*Draws :* MELINDA *shrieks.*

Re-enter MR. WORTHY.

MEL. : Oh ! Mr. Worthy ! save me from these madmen.

[*Exit with* WORTHY.

PLUME : Ha ! ha ! ha ! why don't you follow, sir, and fight the bold ravisher ?

BRAZ. : No, sir, you are my man.

PLUME : I don't like the wages, and I won't be your man.

BRAZ. : Then you're not worth my sword.

PLUME : No ! pray what did it cost ?

BRAZ. : It cost me twenty pistoles in France, and my enemies thousands of lives in Flanders.

PLUME : Then they had a dear bargain.

Enter SILVIA *in male apparel.*

SILV. : Save ye, save ye, gentlemen !

BRAZ. : My dear, I'm yours.

PLUME : Do you know the gentleman ?

BRAZ. : No, but I will presently.—(*To* SILVIA.) Your name, my dear ?

SILV. : Wilful ; Jack Wilful, at your service.

BRAZ. : What, the Kentish Wilfuls, or those of Staffordshire ?

SILV. : Both, sir, both ; I'm related to all the Wilfuls in Europe, and I'm head of the family at present.

PLUME : Do you live in this country, sir ?

SILV. : Yes, sir, I live where I stand ; I have neither home, house, nor habitation beyond this spot of ground.

BRAZ. : What are you, sir ?

SILV. : A rake.

PLUME : In the army, I presume.

SILV. : No, but I intend to list immediately.—Look'ee, gentlemen, he that bids me fairest shall have me.

BRAZ. : Sir, I'll prefer you, I'll make you a corporal this minute.

PLUME : Corporal ! I'll make you my companion, you shall eat with me.

BRAZ. : You shall drink with me.

PLUME : You shall lie with me, you young rogue. [*Kisses her.*

BRAZ. : You shall receive your pay, and do no duty.

SILV. : Then you must make me a field officer.

PLUME : Pho ! pho ! I'll do more than all this ; I'll make you a corporal, and give you a brevet for serjeant.

BRAZ. : Can you read and write, sir ?

SILV. : Yes.

BRAZ. : Then your business is done—I'll make you chaplain to the regiment.

SILV. : Your promises are so equal, that I'm at a loss to choose. There is one Plume, that I hear much commended, in town ; pray, which of you is captain Plume ?

PLUME : I am captain Plume.

BRAZ. : No, no, I am captain Plume.

SILV. : Heyday !

PLUME : Captain Plume ! I'm your servant, my dear.

BRAZ. : Captain Brazen ! I am yours.—(*Aside.*) The fellow dare not fight.

Enter SERJEANT KITE.

KITE (*to* CAPTAIN PLUME) : Sir, if you please—

PLUME : No, no, there's your captain.—Captain Plume, your serjeant here has got so drunk, he mistakes me for you.

BRAZ. : He's an incorrigible sot !—(*To* SILVIA.) Here, my Hector of Holborn, forty shillings for you.

PLUME : I forbid the bans.—Look'ee, friend, you shall list with captain Brazen.

SILV. : I will see captain Brazen hanged first ! I will list with Captain Plume, I am a freeborn Englishman, and will be a slave my own way.—(*To* CAPTAIN BRAZEN.) Look'ee, sir, will you stand by me ?

BRAZ. : I warrant you, my lad.

SILV. (*to* CAPTAIN PLUME) : Then I will tell you, captain Brazen, that you are an ignorant, pretending impudent coxcomb.

BRAZ. : Ay, ay, a sad dog.

SILV. : A very sad dog.—Give me the money, noble captain Plume.

PLUME : Then you won't list with captain Brazen ?

SILV. : I won't.

BRAZ. : Never mind him, child, I'll end the dispute presently.—Heark'ee, my dear. [*Takes* CAPTAIN PLUME *to one side of the stage, and entertains him in dumb show.*

KITE : Sir, he in the plain coat is captain Plume, I am his serjeant, and will take my oath on't.

SILV. : What ! are you serjeant Kite ?

KITE : At your service.

SILV. : Then I would not take your oath for a farthing.

KITE : A very understanding youth of his age !—Pray, sir, let me look you full in the face ?

SILV. : Well, sir, what have you to say to my face ?

KITE : The very image and superscription of my brother ; two bullets of the same caliver were never so like : sure it must be Charles, Charles !

SILV. : What d'ye mean by Charles ?

KITE : The voice too, only a little variation in Effa ut flat.—My dear brother, for I must call you so, if you should have the fortune to enter into the most noble society of the sword, I bespeak you for a comrade.

SILV. : No, sir, I'll be your captain's comrade, if anybody's.

KITE : Ambition there again ! 'Tis a noble passion for a soldier ; by that I gained this glorious halberd. Ambition ! I see a commission in his face already. Pray, noble captain, give me leave to salute you.

[*Offers to kiss her.*

SILV. : What, men kiss one another !

KITE : We officers do : 'tis our way ; we live together like man and wife, always either kissing or fighting.—But I see a storm coming.

SILV. : Now, serjeant, I shall see who is your captain by your knocking down the t'other.

KITE : My captain scorns assistance, sir.

BRAZ. : How dare you contend for anything, and not dare to draw your sword ? But you're a young fellow, and have not been much abroad ; I excuse that, but prithee resign the man, prithee do ; you're a very honest fellow.

PLUME : You lie ; and you are a son of a whore.

[*Draws and makes up to* CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

BRAZ. : Hold ! hold ! did not you refuse to fight for the lady ? [*Retiring.*

PLUME : I always do—but for a man I'll fight knee deep : so you lie again.

[PLUME *and* BRAZEN *fight a traverse or two about the stage :* SILVIA *draws, and is held by* KITE, *who sounds to arms with his mouth ; takes* SILVIA *in his arms, and carries her off.*

BRAZ. : Hold ! where's the man ?

PLUME : Gone.

BRAZ. : Then what do we fight for ?—(*Puts up.*) Now let's embrace, my dear.

PLUME (*putting up*) : With all my heart, my dear.—(*Aside.*) I suppose Kite has listed him by this time. [*They embrace.*

BRAZ. : You are a brave fellow, I always fight with a man before I make him my friend ; and if once I find he will fight, I never quarrel with him afterwards.—And now I'll tell you a secret, my dear friend, that lady that we frighted out of the walk just now I found in bed this morning—so beautiful, so inviting !—I presently locked the door—but I am a man of honour.—But I believe I shall marry her nevertheless—her twenty thousand pound, you know, will be a pretty convenience.—I had an assignation with her here, but your coming spoiled my sport. Curse you, my dear, but don't do so again—

PLUME : No, no, my dear, men are my business at present. [*Exeunt severally.*

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*The Walk by the Severn.*

Enter ROSE *and* BULLOCK *meeting.*

ROSE : Where have you been, you great booby ? you're always out o' the way in the time of preferment.

BULL. : Preferment ! who should prefer me ?

ROSE : I would prefer you ! who should prefer a man but a woman ? Come, throw away that great club, hold up your head, cock your hat, and look big.

BULL. : Ah, Ruose, Ruose, I fear somebody will look big sooner than folk think of ! this genteel breeding never comes into the country without a train of followers.—Here has been Cartwheel, your sweetheart, what will become of him !

ROSE : Look'ee, I'm a great woman, and will provide for my relations. I told the captain how finely he could play upon the tabor and pipe, so he has set him down for drum-major.

BULL. : Nay, sister, why did you not keep that place for me ? you know I always loved to be a-drumming, if it were but on a table or on a quart pot.

Enter SILVIA.

SILV. : Had I but a commission in my pocket, I fancy my breeches would become me as well as any ranting fellow of 'em all ; for I take a bold step, a rakish toss, a smart cock, and an impudent air, to be the principal ingredients in the composition of a captain.—What's here : Rose ! my nurse's daughter ! —I'll go and practise.—Come, child, kiss me at once.—(*Kisses* ROSE.) And her brother too !—(*To* BULLOCK.) Well, honest dungfork, do you know the difference between a horse-cart, and a cart-horse, eh ?

BULL. : I presume that your worship is a captain by your clothes and your courage.

SILV. : Suppose, I were, would you be contented to list, friend ?

ROSE : No, no, though your worship be a handsome man, there be others as fine as you ; my brother is engaged to captain Plume.

SILV. : Plume ! do you know captain Plume ?

ROSE : Yes, I do, and he knows me. He took the very ribbons out of his shirt-sleeves, and put 'em into my shoes. See there—I can assure you, that I can do anything with the captain.

BULL. : That is, in a modest way, sir.—Have a care what you say, Ruose, don't shame your parentage.

ROSE : Nay, for that matter, I am not so simple as to say that I can do anything with the captain but what I may do with anybody else.

SILV. : So ! and pray what do you expect from this captain, child ?

ROSE : I expect, sir,—I expect—but he ordered me to tell nobody.—But suppose that he should promise to marry me ?

SILV. : You should have a care, my dear, men will promise anything beforehand.

ROSE : I know that, but he promised to marry me afterwards.

BULL. : Wauns, Ruose, what have you said ?

SILV. : Afterwards ! after what ?

ROSE : After I had sold him my chickens.—I hope there's no harm in that.

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

PLUME : What, Mr. Wilful, so close with my market-woman !

SILV. (*aside*) : I'll try if he loves her.—(*Aloud.*) Close, sir ! ay, and closer yet, sir.—Come, my pretty maid, you and I will withdraw a little.

PLUME : No, no, friend, I han't done with her yet.

SILV. : Nor have I begun with her, so I have as good right as you have.

PLUME : Thou art a bloody impudent fellow.

SILV. : Sir, I would qualify myself for the service.

PLUME : Hast thou really a mind to the service ?

SILV. : Yes, sir, so let her go.

ROSE : Pray, gentlemen, don't be so violent.

PLUME : Come, leave it to the girl's own choice. Will you belong to me or to that gentleman ?

ROSE : Let me consider, you are both very handsome.

PLUME : Now the natural unconstancy of her sex begins to work. [*Aside.*

ROSE : Pray, sir, what will you give me ?

BULL. : Don't be angry, sir, that my sister should be mercenary, for she's but young.

SILV. : Give thee, child ! I'll set thee above scandal ; you shall have a coach with six before and six behind, an equipage to make vice fashionable, and put virtue out of countenance.

PLUME : Pho ! that's easily done.—I'll do more for thee, child, I'll buy you a furbelow scarf, and give you a ticket to see a play.

BULL. : A play ! Wauns, Ruose, take the ticket, and let's see the show.

SILV. : Look'ee, captain, if you won't resign, I'll go list with captain Brazen this minute.

PLUME : Will you list with me if I give up my title ?

SILV. : I will.

PLUME : Take her : I'll change a woman for a man at any time.

ROSE : I have heard before, indeed, that you captains used to sell your men.

BULL. : Pray, captain, do not send Ruose to the West Indies. [*Cries.*

PLUME : Ha ! ha ! ha ! West Indies !—No, no, my honest lad, give me thy hand ; nor you nor she shall move a step farther than I do. This gentleman is one of us, and will be kind to you, Mrs. Rose.

ROSE : But will you be so kind to me, sir, as the captain would ?

SILV. : I can't be altogether so kind to you, my circumstances are not so good as the captain's ; but I'll take care of you, upon my word.

PLUME : Ay, ay, we'll all take care of her ; she shall live like a princess, and her brother here shall be—What would you be ?

BULL. : O sir ! if you had not promised the place of drum-major—

PLUME : Ay, that is promised. But what think you of barrack-master ? You are a person of understanding, and barrack-master you shall be.—But what's become of this same Cartwheel you told me of, my dear ?

ROSE : We'll go fetch him.—Come, brother barrack-master.—We shall find you at home, noble captain ?

PLUME : Yes, yes.—(*Exeunt* ROSE *and* BULLOCK.) And now, sir, here are your forty shillings.

SILV. : Captain Plume, I despise your listing money ; if I do serve 'tis purely for love—of that wench, I mean. For you must know, that, among my other sallies, I have spent the best part of my fortune in search of a maid, and could never find one hitherto : so you may be assured I'd not sell my freedom under a less purchase than I did my estate. So, before I list, I must be certified that this girl is a virgin.

PLUME : Mr. Wilful, I can't tell you how you can be certified in that point till you try ; but, upon my honour, she may be a vestal for aught that I know to the contrary. I gained her heart, indeed, by some trifling presents and promises, and, knowing that the best security for a woman's soul is her body, I would have made myself master of that too, had not the jealousy of my impertinent landlady interposed.

SILV. : So you only want an opportunity for accomplishing your designs upon her ?

PLUME : Not at all ; I have already gained my ends, which were only the drawing in one or two of her followers. The women, you know, are the loadstones everywhere ; gain the wives, and you are caressed by the husbands ; please the mistresses, and you are valued by the gallants ; secure an interest with the finest women at court, and you procure the favour of the greatest men : so, kiss the prettiest country wenches, and you are sure of listing the lustiest fellows. Some people may call this artifice, but I term it stratagem, since it is so main a part of the service. Besides, the fatigue of recruiting is so intolerable, that, unless we could make ourselves some pleasure amidst the pain, no mortal man would be able to bear it.

SILV. : Well, sir, I am satisfied as to the point in debate ; but now let me beg you to lay aside your recruiting airs, put on the man of honour, and tell me plainly what usage I must expect when I am under your command.

PLUME : You must know, in the first place, then, that I hate to have gentlemen in my company ; for they are always troublesome and expensive, sometimes dangerous ; and 'tis a constant maxim amongst us, that those who know the least obey the best. Notwithstanding all this, I find something so agreeable about you, that engages me to court your company ; and I can't tell how it is, but I should be uneasy to see you under the command of anybody else. Your usage will chiefly depend upon your behaviour ; only this you must expect, that if you commit a small fault I will excuse it, if a great one I'll discharge you ; for something tells me I shall not be able to punish you.

SILV.: And something tells me, that if you do discharge me, 'twill be the greatest punishment you can inflict ; for were we this moment to go upon the greatest dangers in your profession, they would be less terrible to me than to stay behind you.—And now your hand, this lists me—and now you are my captain.

PLUME (*kissing her*) : Your friend.—(*Aside.*) 'Sdeath ! there's something in this fellow that charms me.

SILV. : One favour I must beg. This affair will make some noise, and I have some friends that would censure my conduct if I threw myself into the circumstance of a private sentinel of my own head : I must therefore take care to be impressed by the act of parliament ; you shall leave that to me.

PLUME : What you please as to that.—Will you lodge at my quarters in the mean time ? you shall have part of my bed.

SILV. : O fy ! lie with a common soldier ! Would not you rather lie with a common woman ?

PLUME : No, faith, I'm not that rake that the world imagines ; I have got an air of freedom, which people mistake for lewdness in me, as they mistake formality in others for religion. The world is all a cheat ; only I take mine, which is undesigned, to be more excusable than theirs which is hypocritical. I hurt nobody but myself, and they abuse all mankind.—Will you lie with me ?

SILV. : No, no, captain, you forget Rose ; she's to be my bedfellow, you know.

PLUME : I had forgot ; pray be kind to her. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*The same.*

Enter MELINDA *and* LUCY.

MEL. (*aside*) : 'Tis the greatest misfortune in nature for a woman to want a confidant ! We are so weak that we can do nothing without assistance, and then a secret racks us worse than the colic. I am at this minute so sick of a secret, that I'm ready to faint away.—(*Aloud.*) Help me, Lucy !

LUCY : Bless me, madam ! what's the matter ?

MEL. : Vapours only, I begin to recover.—(*Aside.*) If Silvia were in town I could heartily forgive her faults for the ease of discovering my own.

LUCY : You're thoughtful, madam ; am not I worthy to know the cause ?

MEL. : You are a servant, and a secret would make you saucy.

LUCY : Not unless you should find fault without a cause, madam.

MEL. : Cause or not cause, I must not lose the pleasure of chiding when I please ; women must discharge their vapours somewhere, and before we get husbands our servants must expect to bear with 'em.

LUCY : Then, madam, you had better raise me to a degree above a servant. You know my family, and that five hundred pounds would set me upon the foot of a gentlewoman, and make me worthy the confidence of any lady in the land ; besides, madam, 'twill extremely encourage me in the great design I now have in hand.

MEL. : I don't find that your design can be of any great advantage to you. 'Twill please me, indeed, in the humour I have of being revenged on the fool for his vanity of making love to me, so I don't much care if I do promise you five hundred pound the day of my marriage.

LUCY : That is the way, madam, to make me diligent in the vocation of a confidant, which I think is generally to bring people together.

MEL. : O Lucy ! I can hold my secret no longer. You must know that hearing of the famous fortune-teller in town, I went disguised to satisfy a curiosity, which has cost me dear. That fellow is certainly the devil, or one of his bosom favourites, he has told me the most surprising things of my past life—

LUCY : Things past, madam, can hardly be reckoned surprising, because we know them already. Did he tell you anything surprising that was to come ?

MEL. : One thing very surprising ; he said I should die a maid !

LUCY : Die a maid ! come into the world for nothing ! Dear madam, if you

should believe him, it might come to pass, for the bare thought on't might kill one in four-and-twenty hours.—And did you ask him any questions about me?

MEL. : You ! why, I passed for you.

LUCY : So 'tis I that am to die a maid !—But the devil was a liar from the beginning ; he can't make me die a maid.—(*Aside.*) I have put it out of his power already.

MEL. : I do but jest, I would have passed for you, and called myself Lucy ; but he presently told me my name, my quality, my fortune, and gave me the whole history of my life. He told me of a lover I had in this country, and described Worthy exactly, but in nothing so well as in his present indifference. I fled to him for refuge here to-day ; he never so much as encouraged me in my fright, but coldly told me that he was sorry for the accident, because it might give the town cause to censure my conduct ; excused his not waiting on me home, made me a careless bow, and walked off. 'Sdeath ! I could have stabbed him, or myself, 'twas the same thing.—Yonder he comes —I will so use him !

LUCY : Don't exasperate him ; consider what the fortune-teller told you. Men are scarce, and as times go, it is not impossible for a woman to die a maid.

MEL. : No matter.

Enter MR. WORTHY.

WOR. (*aside*) : I find she's warmed ; I must strike while the iron is hot.—(*Aloud.*) You have a great deal of courage, madam, to venture into the walks where you were so lately frightened.

MEL. : And you have a quantity of impudence to appear before me, that you have so lately affronted.

WOR. : I had no design to affront you, nor appear before you, either, madam : I left you here, because I had business in another place, and came hither, thinking to meet another person.

MEL. : Since you find yourself disappointed, I hope you'll withdraw to another part of the walk.

WOR. : The walk is as free for me as you, madam, and broad enough for us both.—(*They walk by one another, he with his hat cocked, she fretting and tearing her fan.*) Will you please to take snuff, madam ?

[*Offers her his box, she strikes it out of his hand ; while he is gathering it up,*

Enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

BRAZ. : What, here before me, my dear ! [*Claps* MELINDA *round the waist.*

MEL. : What means this insolence ? [*Gives him a box on the ear.*

LUCY : Are you mad ? don't you see Mr. Worthy ? [*To* CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

BRAZ. : No, no, I'm struck blind.—Worthy ! odso ! well turned !—My mistress has wit at her fingers' ends.—Madam, I ask your pardon, 'tis our way abroad. —Mr. Worthy, you are the happy man.

WOR. : I don't envy your happiness very much, if the lady can afford no other sort of favours but what she has bestowed upon you.

MEL. : I am sorry the favour miscarried, for it was designed for you, Mr. Worthy ; and be assured, 'tis the last and only favour you must expect at my hands.—Captain, I ask your pardon.

BRAZ. : I grant it.—(*Exeunt* MELINDA *and* LUCY.) You see, Mr. Worthy, 'twas only a random-shot, it might have taken off your head as well as mine. Courage, my dear ! 'tis the fortune of war.—But the enemy has thought fit to withdraw, I think.

WOR. : Withdraw ! oons, sir ! what d'ye mean by withdraw ?

BRAZ. : I'll show you. [*Exit.*

WOR. : She's lost, irrecoverably lost, and Plume's advice has ruined me ! 'Sdeath ! why should I, that knew her haughty spirit, be ruled by a man that's a stranger to her pride ?

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

PLUME : Ha ! ha ! ha ! a battle-royal. Don't frown so, man ; she's your own, I tell you ; I saw the fury of her love in the extremity of her passion : the wildness of her anger is a certain sign that she loves you to madness. That rogue Kite began the battle with abundance of conduct, and will bring you off victorious, my life on't ; he plays his part admirably ; she's to be with him again presently.

WOR. : But what could be the meaning of Brazen's familiarity with her ?

PLUME : You are no logician, if you pretend to draw consequences from the actions of fools : there's no arguing by the rule of reason upon a science without principles, and such is their conduct. Whim, unaccountable whim, hurries 'em on like a man drunk with brandy before ten o'clock in the morning.—But we lose our sport : Kite has opened above an hour ago, let's away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—SERJEANT KITE'S *Quarters.*

SERJEANT KITE, *in a conjuror's habit, discovered sitting at a table, whereon are a globe and books.*

KITE (*rising*) : By the position of the heavens, gained from my observation upon these celestial globes, I find that Luna was a tidewaiter, Sol a surveyor, Mercury a thief, Venus a whore, Saturn an alderman, Jupiter a rake, and Mars a serjeant of grenadiers ; and this is the system of Kite the conjurer.

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME *and* MR. WORTHY.

PLUME : Well, what success ?

KITE : I have sent away a shoemaker and a tailor already ; one's to be a captain of marines, and the other a major of dragoons : I am to manage them at night.—Have you seen the lady, Mr. Worthy ?

WOR. : Ay, but it won't do. Have you showed her her name, that I tore off from the bottom of the letter ?

KITE : No, sir, I reserve that for the last stroke.

PLUME : What letter ?

WOR. : One that I would not let you see, for fear that you should break Melinda's windows in good earnest. [*Knocking at the door.*

KITE : Officers, to your posts. (PLUME *and* WORTHY *conceal themselves behind a screen.*)—Tycho, mind the door. [SERVANT *opens the door.*

Enter THOMAS.

THOS. : Well, master, are you the cunning man ?

KITE : I am the learned Copernicus.

THOS. : Well, master Coppernose, I'm but a poor man, and I can't afford above a shilling for my fortune.

KITE : Perhaps that is more than 'tis worth.

THOS. : Look'ee, doctor, let me have something that's good for my shilling, or I'll have my money again.

KITE : If there be faith in the stars, you shall have your shilling forty fold.—Your hand, countryman, you're by trade a smith.

THOS. : How the devil should you know that ?

KITE : Because the devil and you are brother-tradesmen—you were born under Forceps.

THOS. : Forceps, what's that ?

KITE : One of the signs. There's Leo, Sagittarius, Forceps, Furnes, Dixmude, Namur, Brussels, Charleroy, and so forth—twelve of 'em—Let me see—did you ever make any bombs or cannon-bullets ?

THOS. : Not I.

KITE : You either have or will. The stars have decreed, that you shall be—I must have more money, sir,—your fortune's great.

THOS. : Faith, doctor, I have no more.

KITE : O sir, I'll trust you, and take it out of your arrears.

THOS. : Arrears ! what arrears ?

KITE : The five hundred pound that's owing to you from the government.

THOS. : Owing me !

KITE : Owing you, sir.—Let me see your t'other hand.—I beg your pardon, it will be owing to you : and the rogue of an agent will demand fifty per cent. for a fortnight's advance.

THOS. : I'm in the clouds, doctor, all this while.

KITE : Sir, I am above 'em, among the stars. In two years, three months, and two hours, you will be made captain of the forges to the grand train of artillery, and will have ten shillings a day, and two servants. 'Tis the decree of the stars, and of the fixed stars, that are as immovable as your anvil ; strike, sir, while the iron is hot. Fly, sir ! begone !

THOS. : What, what would you have me do, doctor ? I wish the stars would put me in a way for this fine place.

KITE : The stars do.—Let me see—ay, about an hour hence walk carelessly into the market-place, and you'll see a tall, slender gentleman, cheapening a pennyworth of apples, with a cane hanging upon his button. This gentleman will ask you what's o'clock. He's your man, and the maker of your fortune : follow him, follow him.—And now go home, and take leave of your wife and children ; an hour hence exactly is your time.

THOS. : A tall slender gentleman, you say, with a cane ? pray, what sort of head has the cane ?

KITE : An amber head, with a black ribbon.

THOS. : And pray, of what employment is the gentleman ?

KITE : Let me see, he's either a collector of the excise, a plenipotentiary, or a captain of grenadiers, I can't tell exactly which. But he'll call you honest—your name is—

THOS. : Thomas.

KITE : Right ! He'll call you honest Tom.

THOS. : But how the devil should he know my name ?

KITE : Oh, there are several sorts of Toms ! Tom o' Lincoln, Tom-tit, Tom Tell-troth, Tom o' Bedlam, and Tom Fool.—(*Knocking at the door.*) Begone ! —an hour hence precisely.

THOS. : You say, he'll ask me what's o'clock ?

KITE : Most certainly.—And you'll answer you don't know :—and be sure you look at St. Mary's dial ; for the sun won't shine, and if it should, you won't be able to tell the figures.

THOS. : I will, I will. [*Exit.*

PLUME (*behind*) : Well done, conjurer ! go on and prosper.

KITE : As you were.

Enter PLUCK.

(*Aside.*) What my old friend Pluck the butcher ! I offered the surly bull-dog five guineas this morning, and he refused it.

PLUCK : So, master Conjurer, here's half-a-crown.—And now you must understand—

KITE : Hold, friend, I know your business beforehand.

PLUCK : You're devilish cunning then, for I don't well know it myself.

KITE : I know more than you, friend.—You have a foolish saying, that such a one knows no more than the man in the moon : I tell you, the man in the moon knows more than all the men under the sun. Don't the moon see all the world ?

PLUCK : All the world see the moon, I must confess.

KITE : Then she must see all the world, that's certain.—Give me your hand.—You're by trade, either a butcher or a surgeon.

PLUCK : True, I am a butcher.

KITE : And a surgeon you will be, the employments differ only in the name : he that can cut up an ox, may dissect a man ; and the same dexterity that cracks a marrow-bone, will cut off a leg or an arm.

PLUCK : What d'ye mean, doctor, what d'ye mean ?

KITE : Patience, patience, Mr. Surgeon General ; the stars are great bodies, and move slowly.

PLUCK : But what d'ye mean by surgeon-general, doctor ?

KITE : Nay, sir, if your worship won't have patience, I must beg the favour of your worship's absence.

PLUCK : My worship ! my worship ! but why my worship ?

KITE : Nay then, I have done. [*Sits down.*

PLUCK : Pray, doctor—

KITE : Fire and fury, sir !—(*Rises in a passion.*) Do you think the stars will be hurried ? Do the stars owe you any money, sir, that you dare to dun their lordships at this rate ? Sir, I am porter to the stars, and I am ordered to let no dun come near their doors.

PLUCK : Dear doctor, I never had any dealings with the stars, they don't owe me a penny. But since you are their porter, please to accept of this half-crown to drink their healths, and don't be angry.

KITE : Let me see your hand then once more.—Here has been gold—five guineas, my friend, in this very hand this morning.

PLUCK : Nay, then he is the devil !—Pray, doctor, were you born of a woman ? or, did you come into the world of your own head ?

KITE : That's a secret.—This gold was offered you by a proper handsome man, called Hawk, or Buzzard, or——

PLUCK : Kite you mean.

KITE : Ay, ay, Kite.

PLUCK : As arrant a rogue as ever carried a halberd ! The impudent rascal would have decoyed me for a soldier !

KITE : A soldier ! a man of your substance for a soldier ! Your mother has a hundred pound in hard money, lying at this minute in the hands of a mercer, not forty yards from this place.

PLUCK : Oons ! and so she has, but very few know so much.

KITE : I know it, and that rogue, what's his name, Kite knew it, and offered you five guineas to list, because he knew your poor mother would give the hundred for your discharge.

PLUCK : There's a dog now !—Flesh, doctor, I'll give you t'other half-crown, and tell me that this same Kite will be hanged.

KITE : He's in as much danger as any man in the county of Salop.

PLUCK : There's your fee.—But you have forgot the surgeon-general all this while.

KITE : You put the stars in a passion.—(*Looks on his books.*) But now they are pacified again :—Let me see, did you never cut off a man's leg ?

PLUCK : No.

KITE : Recollect, pray.

PLUCK : I say, no.

KITE : That's strange ! wonderful strange ! but nothing is strange to me, such wonderful changes have I seen.—The second, or third, ay, the third campaign that you make in Flanders, the leg of a great officer will be shattered by a great shot, you will be there accidentally, and with your cleaver chop off the limb at a blow : in short, the operation will be performed with so much dexterity, that with the general applause you will be made surgeon-general of the whole army.

PLUCK : Nay, for the matter of cutting off a limb, I'll do't, I'll do't with any surgeon in Europe, but I have no thoughts of making a campaign.

KITE : You have no thoughts ! what's matter for your thoughts ? The stars have decreed it, and you must go.

PLUCK : The stars decree it ! oons, sir, the justices can't press me !

KITE : Nay, friend, 'tis none of my business, I ha' done ; only mind this, you'll know more an hour and a half hence, that's all, farewell. [*Going.*

PLUCK : Hold, hold, doctor !—Surgeon-general ! what is the place worth, pray ?

KITE : Five hundred pounds a year, besides guineas for claps.

PLUCK : Five hundred pounds a year !—An hour and a half hence, you say ?

KITE : Prithee, friend, be quiet, don't be so troublesome. Here's such a work to make a booby butcher accept of five hundred pound a year !—But if you must hear it—I'll tell you in short, you'll be standing in your stall an hour and half hence, and a gentleman will come by with a snuff box in his hand, and the tip of his handkerchief hanging out of his right pocket ; he'll ask you the price of a loin of veal, and at the same time stroke your great dog upon the head, and call him Chopper.

PLUCK : Mercy on us ! Chopper is the dog's name.

KITE : Look'ee there—what I say is true—things that are to come must come to pass. Get you home, sell off your stock, don't mind the whining and the snivelling of your mother and your sister—women always hinder preferment —make what money you can, and follow that gentleman, his name begins with a P, mind that.—There will be the barber's daughter too, that you promised marriage to—she will be pulling and haling you to pieces.

PLUCK : What ! know Sally too ? He's the devil, and he needs must go that the devil drives.—(*Going.*) The tip of his handkerchief out of his left pocket ?

KITE : No, no, his right pocket ; if it be the left, 'tis none of the man.

PLUCK : Well, well, I'll mind him. [*Exit.*

PLUME (*behind*) : The right pocket, you say ? [*Knocking at the door.*

KITE : I hear the rustling of silks. Fly, sir ! 'tis madam Melinda.

Enter MELINDA *and* LUCY.

Tycho, chairs for the ladies. [*Calls to* SERVANT.

MEL. : Don't trouble yourself, we shan't stay, doctor.

KITE : Your ladyship is to stay much longer than you imagine.

MEL. : For what ?

KITE : For a husband.—(*To* LUCY.) For your part, madam, you won't stay for a husband.

LUCY : Pray, doctor, do you converse with the stars, or with the devil?

KITE : With both. When I have the destinies of men in search, I consult the stars ; when the affairs of women come under my hands, I advise with my t'other friend.

MEL. : And have you raised the devil upon my account?

KITE : Yes, madam, and he's now under the table.

LUCY : Oh, Heavens protect us ! Dear madam, let's be gone.

KITE : If you be afraid of him, why do you come to consult him?

MEL. (*to* LUCY) : Don't fear, fool.—(*To* KITE.) Do you think, sir, that because I am a woman, I'm to be fooled out of my reason, or frighted out of my senses? Come, show me this devil.

KITE : He's a little busy at present ; but when he has done, he shall wait on you.

MEL. : What is he doing?

KITE : Writing your name in his pocket-book.

MEL. : Ha ! ha ! my name ! Pray, what have you or he to do with my name?

KITE : Look'ee, fair lady, the devil is a very modest person, he seeks nobody unless they seek him first ; he's chained up like a mastiff, and can't stir unless he be let loose. You come to me to have your fortune told—do you think, madam, that I can answer you of my own head? No madam, the affairs of women are so irregular, that nothing less than the devil can give any account of 'em. Now to convince you of your incredulity, I'll show you a trial of my skill.—Here, you *Cacodemon del fuego*—exert your power, draw me this lady's name, the word Melinda, in the proper letters and character of her own handwriting.—Do it at three motions—one—two—three—'tis done.—Now, madam, will you please to send your maid to fetch it?

LUCY : I fetch it ! the devil fetch me if I do !

MEL. : My name in my own handwriting ! that would be convincing indeed.

KITE : Seeing's believing.—(*Goes to the table, lifts up the carpet.*) Here, Tre, Tre, poor Tre, give me the bone, sirrah.—(*He puts his hand under the table,* PLUME *steals to the other side of the table, and catches him by the hand.*) Oh ! oh ! the devil ! the devil in good earnest ! My hand ! my hand ! the devil ! my hand ! —(MELINDA *and* LUCY *shriek, and run to a corner of the stage.* KITE *discovers* PLUME, *and gets away his hand.*) A plague o' your pincers ! he has fixed his nails in my very flesh.—O madam ! you put the demon in such a passion with your scruples, that it has almost cost me my hand.

MEL. : It has cost us our lives almost—but have you got the name?

KITE : Got it ! ay, madam, I have got it here—I'm sure the blood comes.—But there's your name upon that square piece of paper—behold !

MEL. : 'Tis wonderful ! my very letters to a tittle !

LUCY : 'Tis like your hand, madam, but not so like your hand neither, and now I look nearer, 'tis not like your hand at all.

KITE : Here's a chambermaid now that will outlie the devil !

LUCY : Look'ee, madam, they shan't impose upon us ; people can't remember their hands, no more than they can their faces.—Come, madam, let us be certain, write your name upon this paper, then we'll compare the two names.

[*Takes out a paper and folds it.*

KITE : Anything for your satisfaction, madam—here's pen and ink.

[MELINDA *writes,* LUCY *holds the paper.*

LUCY : Let me see it, madam ; 'tis the same—the very same.—(*Aside.*) But I'll secure one copy for my own affairs.

MEL. : This is demonstration.

KITE : 'Tis so, madam.—The word demonstration comes from Demon the father of lies.

MEL. : Well, doctor, I am convinced ; and now, pray, what account can you give me of my future fortune ?

KITE : Before the sun has made one course round this earthly globe, your fortune will be fixed for happiness or misery.

MEL. : What ! so near the crisis of my fate !

KITE : Let me see—about the hour of ten to-morrow morning you will be saluted by a gentleman, who will come to take his leave of you, being designed for travel ; his intention of going abroad is sudden, and the occasion a woman. Your fortune and his are like the bullet and the barrel, one runs plump into the other. In short, if the gentleman travels, he will die abroad ; and if he does you will die before he comes home.

MEL. : What sort of man is he ?

KITE : Madam, he's a fine gentleman and a lover, that is, a man of very good sense, and a very great fool.

MEL. : How is that possible, doctor ?

KITE : Because, madam—because it is so.—A woman's reason is the best for a man's being a fool.

MEL. : Ten o'clock, you say ?

KITE : Ten—about the hour of tea-drinking throughout the kingdom.

MEL. : Here, doctor.—(*Gives money.*) Lucy, have you any questions to ask ?

LUCY : O madam ! a thousand.

KITE : I must beg your patience till another time ; for I expect more company this minute ; besides, I must discharge the gentleman under the table.

LUCY : Oh, pray, sir, discharge us first !

KITE : Tycho, wait on the ladies down stairs.

[*Exeunt* MELINDA *and* LUCY. PLUME *and* WORTHY *come forward laughing.*

KITE : Ay, you may well laugh, gentlemen, not all the cannon of the French army could have frighted me so much as that gripe you gave me under the table.

PLUME : I think, Mr. Doctor, I out-conjured you that bout.

KITE : I was surprised, for I should not have taken a captain for a conjuror.

PLUME : No more than I should a serjeant for a wit.

KITE : Mr. Worthy, you were pleased to wish me joy to-day, I hope to be able to return the compliment to-morrow.

WOR. : I'll make it the best compliment to you that you ever made in your life, if you do. But I must be a traveller, you say ?

KITE : No farther than the chops of the Channel, I presume, sir.

PLUME : That we have concerted already.—(*Loud knocking at the door.*) Heyday ! you don't profess midwifery, doctor.

KITE : Away to your ambuscade ! [PLUME *and* WORTHY *retire as before.*

Enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

BRAZ. : Your servant, servant, my dear.

KITE : Stand off, I have my familiar already.

BRAZ. : Are you bewitched, my dear ?

KITE : Yes, my dear ; but mine is a peaceable spirit, and hates gunpowder. Thus I fortify myself.—(*Draws a circle round him.*) And now, captain, have a care how you force my lines.

BRAZ. : Lines ! what dost talk of lines ! You have something like a fishing-rod there, indeed ; but I come to be acquainted with you, man.—What's your name, my dear ?

KITE : Conundrum.

BRAZ. : Conundrum ! rat me, I knew a famous doctor in London of your name ! —Where were you born ?

KITE : I was born in Algebra.

BRAZ. : Algebra ! 'tis no country in Christendom, I'm sure, unless it be some pitiful place in the Highlands of Scotland.

KITE : Right, I told you I was bewitched.

BRAZ. : So am I, my dear : I am going to be married. I have had two letters from a lady of fortune that loves me to madness, fits, colic, spleen, and vapours : shall I marry her in four-and-twenty hours, ay, or no ?

KITE : I must have the year and day of the month when these letters were dated.

BRAZ. : Why, you old bitch, did you ever hear of love-letter dated with the year and day o' the month ? Do you think billets-doux are like bank bills ?

KITE : They are not so good.—But if they bear no date, I must examine the contents.

BRAZ. : Contents ! that you shall, old boy : here they be both.

[*Pulls out two letters.*

KITE : Only the last you received, if you please.—(*Takes one of the letters.*) Now, sir, if you please to let me consult my books for a minute, I'll send this letter inclosed to you with the determination of the stars upon it to your lodgings.

BRAZ. : With all my heart—I must give him—(*Puts his hand in his pocket.*) Algebra ! I fancy, doctor, 'tis hard to calculate the place of your nativity ?—Here.—(*Gives him money.*) And if I succeed, I'll build a watch-tower upon the top of the highest mountain in Wales for the study of astrology, and the benefit of Conundrums. [*Exit.* PLUME *and* WORTHY *come forward.*

WOR. : O doctor ! that letter's worth a million. Let me see it.—(*Takes the letter.*) And now I have it, I'm afraid to open it.

PLUME : Pho ! let me see it.—(*Snatches the letter from* WORTHY *and opens it.*) If she be a jilt—damn her, she is one ! there's her name at the bottom on't.

WOR. : How ! then I'll travel in good earnest.—(*Looking at the letter.*) By all my hopes, 'tis Lucy's hand !

PLUME : Lucy's !

WOR. : Certainly ; 'tis no more like Melinda's character than black is to white.

PLUME : Then 'tis certainly Lucy's contrivance to draw in Brazen for a husband. —But are you sure 'tis not Melinda's hand ?

WOR. : You shall see.—(*To* KITE.) Where's the bit of paper I gave you just now that the devil writ Melinda upon ?

KITE : Here, sir.

PLUME : 'Tis plain they're not the same. And is this the malicious name that was subscribed to the letter, which made Mr. Balance send his daughter into the country ?

WOR. : The very same, the other fragments I showed you just now. I once intended it for another use, but I think I have turned it now to better advantage.

PLUME : But 'twas barbarous to conceal this so long, and to continue me so many hours in the pernicious heresy of believing that angelic creature could change !—Poor Silvia !

WOR. : Rich Silvia you mean, and poor captain, ha ! ha ! ha ! Come, come, friend, Melinda is true and shall be mine ; Silvia is constant, and may be yours.

PLUME : No, she's above my hopes : but for her sake I'll recant my opinion of her sex.

By some the sex is blamed without design,
Light harmless censure, such as yours and mine ;
Sallies of wit, and vapours of our wine.
Others the justice of the sex condemn,

And wanting merit to create esteem,
Would hide their own defects by censuring them,
But they, secure in their all-conquering charms,
Laugh at the vain efforts of false alarms ;
He magnifies their conquests who complains,
For none would struggle were they not in chains. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—*An Anteroom adjoining* SILVIA'S *Bedchamber ; a periwig, hat, and sword, upon the table.*

Enter SILVIA *in her nightcap.*

SILV. : I have rested but indifferently, and I believe my bedfellow was as little pleased ; poor Rose ! here she comes—

Enter ROSE.

Good morrow, my dear, how d'ye this morning ?
ROSE : Just as I was last night, neither better nor worse for you.
SILV. : What's the matter ? did you not like your bedfellow ?
ROSE : I don't know whether I had a bedfellow or not.
SILV. : Did not I lie with you ?
ROSE : No : I wonder you could have the conscience to ruin a poor girl for nothing.
SILV. : I have saved thee from ruin, child ; don't be melancholy, I can give you as many fine things as the captain can.
ROSE : But you can't I'm sure. [*Knocking at the door.*
SILV : Odso ! my accoutrements.—(*Puts on her periwig, hat, and sword.*) Who's at the door ?
CONSTABLE (*without*) : Open the door, or we'll break it down.
SILV. : Patience a little. [*Opens the door.*

Enter CONSTABLE *and* WATCH.

CON. : We have 'em, we have 'em ! the duck and the mallard both in the decoy.
SILV. : What means this riot ? Stand off !—(*Draws.*) the man dies that comes within reach of my point.
CON. : That is not the point, master ; put up your sword or I shall knock you down ; and so I command the queen's peace.
SILV. : You are some blockhead of a constable.
CON. : I am so, and have a warrant to apprehend the bodies of you and your whore there.
ROSE : Whore ! never was poor woman so abused.

Enter BULLOCK *unbuttoned.*

BULL. : What's the matter now ?—O Mr. Bridewell ! what brings you abroad so early ?
CON. : This, sir.—(*Lays hold of* BULLOCK.) You're the queen's prisoner.
BULL. : Wauns, you lie, sir ! I'm the queen's soldier.
CON. : No matter for that, you shall go before Justice Balance.
SILV. (*aside*) : Balance ! 'tis what I wanted.—(*Aloud.*) Here, Mr. Constable, I resign my sword.
ROSE : Can't you carry us before the captain, Mr. Bridewell ?
CON. : Captain ! han't you got your bellyfull of captains yet ?—Come, come, make way there. [*Exeunt*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* JUSTICE BALANCE'S *House*

Enter JUSTICE BALANCE *and* JUSTICE SCALE.

SCALE : I say 'tis not to be borne, Mr. Balance !

BAL. : Look'ee, Mr. Scale, for my own part I shall be very tender in what regards the officers of the army ; they expose their lives to so many dangers for us abroad, that we may give them some grains of allowance at home.

SCALE : Allowance ! this poor girl's father is my tenant ; and, if I mistake not, her mother nursed a child for you. Shall they debauch our daughters to our faces ?

BAL. : Consider, Mr. Scale, that were it not for the bravery of these officers, we should have French dragoons among us, that would leave us neither liberty, property, wife, nor daughter. Come, Mr. Scale, the gentlemen are vigorous and warm, and may they continue so ; the same heat that stirs them up to love, spurs them on to battle : you never knew a great general in your life, that did not love a whore. This I only speak in reference to captain Plume—for the other spark I know nothing of.

SCALE : Nor can I hear of anybody that does.—Oh, here they come.

Enter CONSTABLE *and* WATCH, *with* SILVIA, BULLOCK, *and* ROSE.

CON. : May it please your worships we took them in the very act, *re infecta*, sir. The gentleman, indeed, behaved himself like a gentleman ; for he drew his sword and swore, and afterwards laid it down, and said nothing.

BAL. : Give the gentleman his sword again—wait you without.—(*Exeunt* CONSTABLE *and* WATCH.) I'm sorry, sir.—(*To* SILVIA) to know a gentleman upon such terms, that the occasion of our meeting should prevent the satisfaction of an acquaintance.

SILV. : Sir, you need make no apology for your warrant, no more than I shall do for my behaviour : my innocence is upon an equal foot with your authority.

SCALE : Innocence ! have not you seduced that young maid ?

SILV. : No, Mr. Goosecap, she seduced me.

BULL. : So she did, I'll swear—for she proposed marriage first.

BAL. : What, then you are married, child ? [*To* ROSE.

ROSE : Yes, sir, to my sorrow.

BAL. : Who was witness ?

BULL. : That was I—I danced, threw the stocking, and spoke jokes by their bedside, I'm sure.

BAL. : Who was the minister ?

BULL. : Minister ! we are soldiers, and want no ministers. They were married by the articles of war.

BAL. : Hold thy prating, fool !—(*To* SILVIA.) Your appearance, sir, promises some understanding ; pray what does this fellow mean ?

SILV. : He means marriage, I think—but that you know is so odd a thing, that hardly any two people under the sun agree in the ceremony ; some make it a sacrament, others a convenience, and others make it a jest ; but among soldiers 'tis most sacred. Our sword, you know, is our honour ; that we lay down ; the hero jumps over it first, and the amazon after—leap rogue, follow whore—the drum beats a ruff, and so to bed ; that's all—the ceremony is concise.

BULL. : And the prettiest ceremony, so full of pastime and prodigality !—

BAL. : What ! are you a soldier ?

BULL. : Ay, that I am. Will your worship lend me your cane, and I'll show you how I can exercise.

BAL. (*striking him over the head.*) Take it.—(*To* SILVIA.) Pray, sir, what commission may you bear?

SILV. : I'm called captain, sir, by all the coffeemen, drawers, whores, and groom-porters in London ; for I wear a red coat, a sword, a hat *bien troussé*, a martial twist in my cravat, a fierce knot in my periwig, a cane upon my button, piquet in my head, and dice in my pocket.

SCALE : Your name, pray, sir?

SILV. : Captain Pinch : I cock my hat with a pinch, I take snuff with a pinch, pay my whores with a pinch. In short, I can do anything at a pinch, but fight and fill my belly.

BAL. : And pray, sir, what brought you into Shropshire?

SILV. : A pinch, sir : I knew you country gentlemen want wit, and you know that we town gentlemen want money, and so—

BAL. : I understand you, sir.—Here, constable!

Re-enter CONSTABLE.

Take this gentleman into custody till farther orders.

ROSE : Pray your worship don't be uncivil to him, for he did me no hurt ; he's the most harmless man in the world, for all he talks so.

SCALE : Come, come, child, I'll take care of you.

SILV. : What, gentlemen, rob me of my freedom, and my wife at once! 'Tis the first time they ever went together.

BAL. : Hearkʼee, constable! [*Whispers him.*

CON. : It shall be done, sir.—Come along, sir.

[*Exit with* BULLOCK *and* SILVIA.

BAL. : Come, Mr. Scale, we'll manage the spark presently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—MELINDA'S *Apartment*

Enter MELINDA *and* WORTHY.

MEL. (*aside*) : So far the prediction is right, 'tis ten exactly.—(*Aloud.*) And pray, sir, how long have you been in this travelling humour?

WOR. : 'Tis natural, madam, for us to avoid what disturbs our quiet.

MEL. : Rather the love of change, which is more natural, may be the occasion of it.

WOR. : To be sure, madam, there must be charms in variety, else neither you nor I should be so fond of it.

MEL. : You mistake, Mr. Worthy, I am not so fond of variety as to travel for't, nor do I think it prudence in you to run yourself into a certain expense and danger, in hopes of precarious pleasures, which at best never answer expectation ; as 'tis evident from the example of most travellers, that long more to return to their own country than they did to go abroad.

WOR. : What pleasures I may receive abroad are indeed uncertain ; but this I am sure of, I shall meet with less cruelty among the most barbarous nations, than I have found at home.

MEL. : Come, sir, you and I have been jangling a great while ; I fancy if we made up our accounts, we should the sooner come to an agreement.

WOR. : Sure, madam, you won't dispute your being in my debt? My fears, sighs, vows, promises, assiduities, anxieties, jealousies, have run on for a whole year without any payment.

MEL. : A year! oh, Mr. Worthy! what you owe to me is not to be paid under a seven years' servitude. How did you use me the year before? when, taking the advantage of my innocence and necessity, you would have made me

your mistress, that is, your slave. Remember the wicked insinuations, artful baits, deceitful arguments, cunning pretences ; then your impudent behaviour, loose expressions, familiar letters, rude visits,—remember those ! those, Mr. Worthy !

WOR. (*aside*) : I do remember, and am sorry I made no better use of 'em.—(*Aloud.*) But you may remember, madam, that—

MEL. : Sir, I'll remember nothing—'tis your interest that I should forget : you have been barbarous to me, I have been cruel to you ; put that and that together, and let one balance the other. Now if you will begin upon a new score, lay aside your adventuring airs, and behave yourself handsomely till Lent be over ; here's my hand, I'll use you as a gentleman should be.

WOR. : And if I don't use you as a gentlewoman should be, may this be my poison ! [*Kissing her hand.*

Enter SERVANT.

SER. : Madam, the coach is at the door. [*Exit.*

MEL. : I am going to Mr. Balance's country-house to see my cousin Silvia ; I have done her an injury, and can't be easy till I have asked her pardon.

WOR. : I dare not hope for the honour of waiting on you.

MEL. : My coach is full ; but if you will be so gallant as to mount your own horses and follow us, we shall be glad to be overtaken ; and if you bring captain Plume with you, we shan't have the worse reception.

WOR. : I'll endeavour it. [*Exit, leading* MELINDA.

SCENE IV.—*The Market-Place*

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME *and* SERJEANT KITE.

PLUME : A baker, a tailor, a smith, and a butcher—I believe the first colony planted in Virginia had not more trades in their company than I have in mine.

KITE : The butcher, sir, will have his hands full ; for we have two sheep-stealers among us. I hear of a fellow too committed just now for stealing of horses.

PLUME : We'll dispose of him among the dragoons. Have we ne'er a poulterer among us ?

KITE : Yes, sir, the king of the gipsies is a very good one, he has an excellent hand at a goose or a turkey. Here's captain Brazen, sir, I must go look after the men. [*Exit.*

Enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN, *reading a letter.*

BRAZ. : Um, um, um, the canonical hour—Um, um, very well.—My dear Plume ! give me a buss.

PLUME : Half a score, if you will, my dear. What hast got in thy hand, child ?

BRAZ. : 'Tis a project for laying out a thousand pound.

PLUME : Were it not requisite to project first how to get it in ?

BRAZ. : You can't imagine, my dear, that I want twenty thousand pound ; I have spent twenty times as much in the service. Now, my dear, pray advise me, my head runs much upon architecture, shall I build a privateer or a playhouse ?

PLUME : An odd question—a privateer or a playhouse ! 'Twill require some consideration.—Faith, I'm for a privateer.

BRAZ. : I'm not of your opinion, my dear.—For in the first place a privateer may be ill built.

PLUME : And so may a playhouse.

BRAZ. : But a privateer may be ill manned.
PLUME : And so may a playhouse.
BRAZ. : But a privateer may run upon the shallows.
PLUME : Not so often as a playhouse.
BRAZ. : But you know a privateer may spring a leak.
PLUME : And I know that a playhouse may spring a great many.
BRAZ. : But suppose the privateer come home with a rich booty, we should never agree about our shares.
PLUME : 'Tis just so in a playhouse :—so, by my advice, you shall fix upon the privateer.
BRAZ. : Agreed !—But if this twenty thousand should not be in specie—
PLUME : What twenty thousand ?
BRAZ. : Hark'ee. [*Whispers.*
PLUME : Married !
BRAZ. : Presently, we're to meet about half a mile out of town at the water-side—and so forth.—(*Reads.*) *For fear I should be known by any of Worthy's friends, you must give me leave to wear my mask till after the ceremony, which will make me for ever yours.*—Look'ee there, my dear dog.
[*Shows the bottom of the letter to* PLUME.
PLUME : Melinda !—and by this light, her own hand !—Once more, if you please, my dear.—Her hand exactly !—Just now, you say ?
BRAZ. : This minute I must be gone.
PLUME : Have a little patience, and I'll go with you.
BRAZ. : No, no, I see a gentleman coming this way, that may be inquisitive ; 'tis Worthy, do you know him ?
PLUME : By sight only.
BRAZ. : Have a care, the very eyes discover secrets. [*Exit.*

Enter MR. WORTHY.

WOR. : To boot and saddle, captain, you must mount.
PLUME : Whip and spur, Worthy, or you won't mount.
WOR. : But I shall : Melinda and I are agreed, she's gone to visit Silvia, we are to mount and follow ; and could we carry a parson with us, who knows what might be done for us both ?
PLUME : Don't trouble your head ; Melinda has secured a parson already.
WOR. : Already ! do you know more than I ?
PLUME : Yes, I saw it under her hand.—Brazen and she are to meet half a mile hence at the waterside, there to take boat, I suppose to be ferried over to the Elysian fields, if there be any such thing in matrimony.
WOR. : I parted with Melinda just now ; she assured me she hated Brazen, and that she resolved to discard Lucy for daring to write letters to him in her name.
PLUME : Nay, nay, there's nothing of Lucy in this.—I tell ye, I saw Melinda's hand, as surely as this is mine.
WOR. : But I tell you, she's gone this minute to justice Balance's country-house.
PLUME : But I tell you, she's gone this minute to the water-side.

Enter SERVANT.

SER. (*to* WORTHY) : Madam Melinda has sent word, that you need not trouble yourself to follow her, because her journey to justice Balance's is put off, and she's gone to take the air another way.
WOR. : How ! her journey put off !
PLUME : That is, her journey was a put-off to you.

WOR. : 'Tis plain, plain !—But how, where, when is she to meet Brazen ?
PLUME : Just now, I tell you, half a mile hence at the water-side.
WOR. : Up or down the water ?
PLUME : That I don't know.
WOR. : I'm glad my horses are ready.—Jack, get 'em out. [*Exit* SERVANT.
PLUME : Shall I go with you ?
WOR. : Not an inch ; I shall return presently.
PLUME : You'll find me at the hall ; the justices are sitting by this time, and I must attend them. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE V.—*A Court of Justice*

JUSTICES BALANCE, SCALE, *and* SCRUPLE, *discovered upon the bench ;* SERJEANT KITE, CONSTABLE, *and* MOB, *in attendance.*

KITE (*aside to* CONSTABLE) : Pray, who are those honourable gentlemen upon the bench ?
CON. : He in the middle is justice Balance, he on the right is justice Scale, and he on the left is justice Scruple ; and I am Mr. CONSTABLE :—four very honest gentlemen.
KITE : O dear sir ! I am your most obedient servant.—(*Saluting him.*) I fancy, sir, that your employment and mine are much the same ; for my business is to keep people in order, and if they disobey, to knock 'em down ; and then we are both staff-officers.
CON. : Nay, I'm a serjeant myself—of the militia. Come, brother, you shall see me exercise. Suppose this a musket now : now I am shouldered.
[*Puts his staff on his right shoulder.*
KITE : Ay, you are shouldered pretty well for a constable's staff ; but for a musket, you must put it on t'other shoulder, my dear.
CON. : Adso ! that's true.—Come, now give the word of command.
KITE : Silence !
CON. : Ay, ay, so we will—we will be silent.
KITE : Silence, you dog, silence !
[*Strikes him over the head with his halberd.*
CON. : That's the way to silence a man with a witness ! What d'ye mean, friend ?
KITE : Only to exercise you, sir.
CON. : Your exercise differs so from ours, that we shall ne'er agree about it. If my own captain had given me such a rap, I had taken the law of him.

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

BAL. : Captain, you're welcome.
PLUME : Gentlemen, I thank you.
SCRUP. : Come, honest captain, sit by me.—(PLUME *takes his seat upon the bench.*) Now produce your prisoners.—Here, that fellow there—set him up.—Mr. Constable, what have you to say against this man ?
CON. : I have nothing to say against him, an please you.
BAL. : No ! what made you bring him hither ?
CON. : I don't know, an please your worship.
SCALE : Did not the contents of your warrant direct you what sort of men to take up ?
CON. : I can't tell, an please ye ; I can't read.
SCRUP. : A very pretty constable truly !—I find we have no business here.

KITE : May it please the worshipful bench, I desire to be heard in this case, as being counsel for the queen.

BAL. : Come, serjeant, you shall be heard, since nobody else will speak ; we won't come here for nothing.

KITE : This man is but one man ; the country may spare him, and the army wants him : besides, he's cut out by nature for a grenadier ; he's five foot ten inches high ; he shall box, wrestle, or dance the Cheshire round with any man in the country ; he gets drunk every sabbath day, and he beats his wife.

WIFE : You lie, sirrah ! you lie !—An please your worship, he's the best-natur'dst, pains-taking'st man in the parish, witness my five poor children.

SCRUP. : A wife and five children !—You constable, you rogue, how durst you impress a man that has a wife and five children ?

SCALE : Discharge him ! discharge him !

BAL. : Hold, gentlemen !—Heark'ee, friend, how do you maintain your wife and children ?

PLUME : They live upon wildfowl and venison, sir ; the husband keeps a gun, and kills all the hares and partridges within five miles round.

BAL. : A gun ! nay, if he be so good at gunning, he shall have enough on't. He may be of use against the French, for he shoots flying, to be sure.

SCRUP. : But his wife and children, Mr. Balance !

WIFE : Ay, ay, that's the reason you would send him away ; you know I have a child every year, and you are afraid they should come upon the parish at last.

PLUME : Look'ee there, gentlemen, the honest woman has spoke it at once ; the parish had better maintain five children this year, than six or seven the next. That fellow, upon his high feeding, may get you two or three beggars at a birth.

WIFE : Look'ee, Mr. Captain, the parish shall get nothing by sending him away, for I won't lose my teeming-time, if there be a man left in the parish.

BAL. : Send that woman to the house of correction—and the man—

KITE : I'll take care o' him, if you please. [*Takes him down.*

SCALE : Here, you constable, the next :—set up that black-faced fellow, he has a gunpowder look. What can you say against this man, constable ?

CON. : Nothing, but that he is a very honest man.

PLUME : Pray, gentlemen, let me have one honest man in my company, for the novelty's sake.

BAL. : What are you, friend ?

MOB : A collier ; I work in the coal-pits.

SCRUP. : Look'ee, gentlemen, this fellow has a trade, and the act of parliament here expresses, that we are to impress no man that has any visible means of a livelihood.

KITE : May it please your worships, this man has no visible means of livelihood, for he works underground.

PLUME : Well said, Kite ! Besides, the army wants miners.

BAL. : Right, and had we an order of government for't, we could raise you in this and the neighbouring county of Stafford, five hundred colliers, that would run you underground like moles, and do more service in a siege than all the miners in the army.

SCRUP. : Well, friend, what have you to say for yourself ?

MOB : I'm married.

KITE : Lack-a-day, so am I !

MOB : Here's my wife, poor woman.

BAL. : Are you married, good woman ?

WOM. : I'm married in conscience.

KITE : May it please your worship, she's with child in conscience.

SCALE : Who married you, mistress ?

WOM. : My husband—we agreed that I should call him husband, to avoid passing for a whore, and that he should call me wife, to shun going for a soldier.

SCRUP. : A very pretty couple ! Pray, captain, will you take 'em both.

PLUME : What say you, Mr. Kite ? will you take care of the woman ?

KITE : Yes, sir ; she shall go with us to the seaside, and there, if she has a mind to drown herself, we'll take care that nobody shall hinder her.

BAL. : Here, constable, bring in my man.—(*Exit* CONSTABLE.) Now, captain, I'll fit you with a man, such as you ne'er listed in your life.

Re-enter CONSTABLE *with* SILVIA.

Oh ! my friend Pinch, I'm very glad to see you.

SILV. : Well, sir, and what then ?

SCALE : What then ! is that your respect to the bench ?

SILV. : Sir, I don't care a farthing for you nor your bench neither.

SCRUP. : Look'ee, gentlemen, that's enough : he's a very impudent fellow, and fit for a soldier.

SCALE : A notorious rogue, I say, and very fit for a soldier.

CON. : A whoremaster, I say, and therefore fit to go.

BAL. : What think you, captain ?

PLUME : I think he's a very pretty fellow, and therefore fit to serve.

SILV. : Me for a soldier ! send your own lazy, lubberly sons at home, fellows that hazard their necks every day in pursuit of a fox, yet dare not peep abroad to look an enemy in the face.

CON. : May it please your worships, I have a woman at the door to swear a rape against this rogue.

SILV. : Is it your wife or daughter, booby ? I ravished 'em both yesterday.

BAL. : Pray, captain, read the Articles of War, we'll see him listed immediately.

PLUME (*reads*) : *Articles of War against mutiny and desertion*—

SILV. : Hold, sir !—Once more, gentlemen, have a care what you do, for you shall severely smart for any violence you offer to me ; and you, Mr. Balance, I speak to you particularly, you shall heartily repent it.

PLUME · Look'ee, young spark, say but one word more, and I'll build a horse for you as high as the ceiling, and make you ride the most tiresome journey that ever you made in your life.

SILV. : You have made a fine speech, good captain Huffcap, but you had better be quiet, I shall find a way to cool your courage.

PLUME : Pray, gentlemen, don't mind him, he's distracted.

SILV. : 'Tis false ! I am descended of as good a family as any in your county ; my father is as good a man as any upon your bench, and I am heir to twelve hundred pound a year.

BAL. : He's certainly mad !—Pray, captain, read the Articles of War.

SILV. : Hold once more !—Pray, Mr. Balance, to you I speak, suppose I were your child, would you use me at this rate ?

BAL. : No, faith, were you mine, I would send you to Bedlam first, and into the army afterwards.

SILV. : But consider my father, sir, he's as good, as generous, as brave, as just a man as ever served his country ; I'm his only child, perhaps the loss of me may break his heart.

BAL. : He's a very great fool if it does.—Captain, if you don't list him this minute, I'll leave the court.

PLUME : Kite, do you distribute the levy-money to the men while I read.

KITE : Ay, sir.—Silence, gentlemen !

[CAPTAIN PLUME *reads the Articles of War.*

BAL. : Very well ; now, captain, let me beg the favour of you, not to discharge this fellow upon any account whatsoever.—Bring in the rest.

CON. : There are no more, an't please your worship.

BAL. : No more ! there were five two hours ago.

SILV. : 'Tis true, sir, but this rogue of a constable let the rest escape for a bribe of eleven shillings a man ; because he said the act allowed him but ten, so the odd shilling was clear gains.

JUSTICES : How !

SILV. : Gentlemen, he offered to let me get away for two guineas, but I had not so much about me ; this is truth, and I'm ready to swear it.

KITE : And I'll swear it ; give me the book, 'tis for the good of the service.

MOB : May it please your worship, I gave him half-a crown to say that I was an honest man ; but now, since that your worships have made me a rogue, I hope I shall have my money again.

BAL. : 'Tis my opinion, that this constable be put into the captain's hands, and if his friends don't bring four good men for his ransom by to-morrow night—captain, you shall carry him to Flanders.

SCALE. SCRUP. : Agreed ! agreed !

PLUME : Mr. Kite, take the constable into custody.

KITE : Ay, ay, sir.—(*To* CONSTABLE.) Will you please to have your office taken from you ? or will you handsomely lay down your staff, as your betters have done before you ? [CONSTABLE *drops his staff.*

BAL. : Come, gentlemen, there needs no great ceremony in adjourning this court.—Captain, you shall dine with me.

KITE (*to* CONSTABLE) : Come, Mr. Militia Serjeant, I shall silence you now, I believe, without your taking the law of me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*The Fields.*

Enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN *leading* LUCY *masked.*

BRAZ. : The boat is just below here.

Enter MR. WORTHY *with a case of pistols under his arm.*

WOR. : Here, sir, take your choice.

[*Going between them, and offering the pistols.*

BRAZ. : What ! pistols ! are they charged, my dear ?

WOR. : With a brace of bullets each.

BRAZ. : But I'm a foot-officer, my dear, and never use pistols, the sword is my way—and I won't be put out of my road to please any man.

WOR. : Nor I neither ; so have at you. [*Cocks one pistol.*

BRAZ. : Look'ee, my dear, I don't care for pistols.—Pray, oblige me, and let us have a bout at sharps ; damn it, there's no parrying these bullets !

WOR. : Sir, if you han't your bellyful of these, the swords shall come in for second course.

BRAZ. : Why, then, fire and fury ! I have eaten smoke from the mouth of a cannon, sir ; don't think I fear powder, for I live upon't. Let me see—(*Takes one.*) And now, sir, how many paces distant shall we fire ?

WOR. : Fire you when you please, I'll reserve my shot till I am sure of you.
BRAZ. : Come, where's your cloak ?
WOR. : Cloak ! what d'ye mean ?
BRAZ. : To fight upon ; I always fight upon a cloak, 'tis our way abroad.
LUCY : Come, gentlemen, I'll end the strife. [*Unmasks.*
WOR. : Lucy !—take her.
BRAZ. : The devil take me if I do ! Huzza !—(*Fires his pistol.*) D'ye hear, d'ye hear, you plaguy harridan, how those bullets whistle ! suppose they had been lodged in my gizzard now !
LUCY : Pray, sir, pardon me.
BRAZ. : I can't tell, child, till I know whether my money is safe.—(*Searching his pockets.*) Yes, yes, I do pardon you, but if I had you in the Rose tavern, Covent-Garden, with three or four hearty rakes, and three or four smart napkins, I would tell you another story, my dear. [*Exit.*
WOR. : And was Melinda privy to this ?
LUCY : No, sir, she wrote her name upon a piece of paper at the fortune-teller's last night, which I put in my pocket, and so writ above it to the captain.
WOR. : And how came Melinda's journey put off ?
LUCY : At the town's end she met Mr. Balance's steward, who told her, that Mrs. Silvia was gone from her father's, and nobody could tell whither.
WOR. : Silvia gone from her father's ! This will be news to Plume.—Go home, and tell your lady how near I was being shot for her. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE VII.—*A Room in* JUSTICE BALANCE'S *House.*

Enter JUSTICE BALANCE *and* STEWARD.

STEW. : We did not miss her till the evening, sir ; and then, searching for her in the chamber that was my young master's, we found her clothes there ; but the suit that your son left in the press, when he went to London, was gone.
BAL. : The white-trimmed with silver ?
STEW. : The same.
BAL. : You han't told that circumstance to anybody ?
STEW. : To none but your worship.
BAL. : And be sure you don't. Go into the dining-room, and tell captain Plume that I beg to speak with him.
STEW. : I shall. [*Exit.*
BAL. : Was ever man so imposed upon ! I had her promise, indeed, that she should never dispose of herself without my consent. I have consented with a witness, given her away as my act and deed. And this, I warrant, the captain thinks will pass ; no, I shall never pardon him the villany, first of robbing me of my daughter, and then the mean opinion he must have of me, to think that I could be so wretchedly imposed upon ; her extravagant passion might encourage her in the attempt, but the contrivance must be his. I'll know the truth presently.

Enter CAPTAIN PLUME.

Pray, captain, what have you done with your young gentleman soldier ?
PLUME : He's at my quarters, I suppose, with the rest of my men.
BAL. : Does he keep company with the common soldiers ?
PLUME : No, he's generally with me.
BAL. : He lies with you, I presume ?
PLUME : No, faith, I offered him part of my bed ; but the young rogue fell in love with Rose, and has lain with her, I think, since he came to town.

BAL. : So, that between you both, Rose has been finely managed.

PLUME : Upon my honour, sir, she had no harm from me.

BAL. (*aside*) : All's safe, I find !—(*Aloud.*) Now, captain, you must know that the young fellow's impudence in court was well grounded ; he said I should heartily repent his being listed, and so I do from my soul.

PLUME : Ay ! for what reason ?

BAL. : Because he is no less than what he said he was, born of as good a family as any in this county, and is heir to twelve hundred pound a year.

PLUME : I'm very glad to hear it—for I wanted but a man of that quality to make my company a perfect representative of the whole commons of England.

BAL. : Won't you discharge him ?

PLUME : Not under a hundred pound sterling.

BAL. : You shall have it, for his father is my intimate friend.

PLUME : Then you shall have him for nothing.

BAL. : Nay, sir, you shall have your price.

PLUME : Not a penny, sir ; I value an obligation to you much above a hundred pound.

BAL. : Perhaps, sir, you shan't repent your generosity.—Will you please to write his discharge in my pocket-book ?—(*Gives his book.*) In the mean time, we'll send for the gentleman.—Who waits there ?

Enter SERVANT.

Go to the captain's lodging, and inquire for Mr. Wilful, tell him his captain wants him here immediately.

SER. : Sir, the gentleman's below at the door, inquiring for the captain.

PLUME : Bid him come up.—(*Exit* SERVANT.) Here's the discharge, sir.

BAL. : Sir, I thank you.—(*Aside.*) 'Tis plain he had no hand in't.

Enter SILVIA.

SILV. : I think, captain, you might have used me better than to leave me yonder among your swearing, drunken crew. And you, Mr. Justice, might have been so civil as to have invited me to dinner, for I have eaten with as good a man as your worship.

PLUME : Sir, you must charge our want of respect, upon our ignorance of your quality.—But now you are at liberty—I have discharged you.

SILV. : Discharged me !

BAL. : Yes, sir, and you must once more go home to your father.

SILV. : My father ! then I am discovered.—O sir ! (*Kneeling.*) I expect no pardon.

BAL. : Pardon ! no, no, child, your crime shall be your punishment.—Here captain, I deliver her over to the conjugal power for her chastisement ; since she will be a wife, be you a husband, a very husband. When she tells you of her love, upbraid her with her folly ; be modishly ungrateful, because she has been unfashionably kind, and use her worse than you would anybody else, because you can't use her so well as she deserves.

PLUME : And are you Silvia, in good earnest ?

SILV. : Earnest ! I have gone too far to make it a jest, sir.

PLUME : And do you give her to me in good earnest ?

BAL. : If you please to take her, sir.

PLUME : Why then I have saved my legs and arms, and lost my liberty ; secure from wounds, I am prepared for the gout ; farewell subsistence, and welcome taxes !—Sir, my liberty, and hopes of being a general, are much dearer to me than your twelve hundred pound a year.—But to your love, madam, I

resign my freedom, and to your beauty my ambition : greater in obeying at your feet, than commanding at the head of an army.

Enter MR. WORTHY.

WOR. : I am sorry to hear, Mr. Balance, that your daughter is lost.

BAL. : So am not I, sir, since an honest gentleman has found her.

Enter MELINDA.

MEL. : Pray, Mr. Balance, what's become of my cousin Silvia ?

BAL. : Your cousin Silvia is talking yonder with your cousin Plume.

MEL. WOR. : How !

SILV. : Do you think it strange, cousin, that a woman should change ? but, I hope, you'll excuse a change that has proceeded from constancy. I altered my outside, because I was the same within ; and only laid by the woman to make sure of my man ; that's my history.

MEL. : Your history is a little romantic, cousin, but since success has crowned your adventures, you will have the world o' your side, and I shall be willing to go with the tide, provided you'll pardon an injury I offered you in the letter to your father.

PLUME : That injury, madam, was done to me, and the reparation I expect shall be made to my friend ; make Mr. Worthy happy, and I shall be satisfied.

MEL. : A good example, sir, will go a great way : when my cousin is pleased to surrender, 'tis probable I shan't hold out much longer.

Enter CAPTAIN BRAZEN.

BRAZ. : Gentlemen, I am yours.—Madam, I am not yours.

MEL. : I'm glad on't, sir.

BRAZ. : So am I.—You have got a pretty house here, Mr. Laconic.

BAL. : 'Tis time to right all mistakes.—My name, sir, is Balance.

BRAZ. : Balance ! Sir, I am your most obedient !—I know your whole genera tion. Had not you an uncle that was governor of the Leeward Islands some years ago ?

BAL. : Did you know him ?

BRAZ. : Intimately, sir. He played at billiards to a miracle. You had a brother too, that was captain of a fireship—poor Dick—he had the most engaging way with him—of making punch—and then his cabin was so neat—but his boy Jack was the most comical bastard—ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! a pickled dog, I shall never forget him.

PLUME : Well, captain, are you fixed in your project yet ? are you still for the privateer ?

BRAZ. : No, no, I had enough of a privateer just now ; I had like to have been picked up by a cruiser under false colours, and a French pickaroon for aught I know.

PLUME : But have you got your recruits, my dear ?

BRAZ. : Not a stick, my dear.

PLUME : Probably I shall furnish you.

Enter ROSE *and* BULLOCK.

ROSE : Captain, captain, I have got loose once more, and have persuaded my sweetheart Cartwheel to go with us ; but you must promise not to part with me again.

SILV. : I find, Mrs. Rose has not been pleased with her bedfellow.

ROSE : Bedfellow ! I don't know whether I had a bedfellow or not.

SILV. : Don't be in a passion, child, I was as little pleased with your company as you could be with mine.

BULL. : Pray, sir, dunna be offended at my sister, she's something underbred ; but if you please, I'll lie with you in her stead.

PLUME : I have promised, madam, to provide for this girl ; now will you be pleased to let her wait upon you ? or shall I take care of her ?

SILV. : She shall be my charge, sir ; you may find it business enough to take care of me.

BULL. : Ay, and of me, captain ; for wauns ! if ever you lift your hand against me, I'll desert.

PLUME : Captain Brazen shall take care o' that.—(*To* CAPTAIN BRAZEN.) My dear, instead of the twenty thousand pound you talked of, you shall have the twenty brave recruits that I have raised, at the rate they cost me.—My commission I lay down, to be taken up by some braver fellow, that has more merit and less good fortune, whilst I endeavour, by the example of this worthy gentleman, to serve my queen and country at home.

With some regret I quit the active field,
Where glory full reward for life does yield :
But the recruiting trade, with all its train
Of lasting plague, fatigue, and endless pain,
I gladly quit, with my fair spouse to stay,
And raise recruits the matrimonial way. [*Exeunt omnes.*

1773

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

OR THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT

(By OLIVER GOLDSMITH)

The Beaux Stratagem, produced in the year of Farquhar's death, was followed nearly seventy years later, by *She Stoops to Conquer*. The interval between the two productions was a hiatus in the history of English drama. The play shows little trace of such a hiatus, and this is the more curious, in that, unlike the interval that separates the " Elizabethan " from the Restoration drama, the theatres were open and active throughout the period. The stage history of those years is interesting ; the plays are not. They belong for the most part to the category of " sentimental comedy," the sentimentality being a convention of proved commercial value. Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774) sensed that the atmosphere of the London theatre, while it prohibited a serious drama of any worth, might well sustain the dignity of a genuine comedy, and he determined to supply such a comedy. His first play, *The Good-natured Man* (1768), having run for only nine nights, it required all the efforts of such influential friends as he found in Dr. Johnson's circle to procure a hearing for a second venture. *She Stoops to Conquer*, finished in 1771, was produced at Covent Garden two years later, and despite the pessimism alike of manager and author, it " succeeded prodigiously." It was a first night to be remembered. " All eyes," records Richard Cumberland (of the rival " sentimental " school) " were upon Johnson, who sate in a front row of a side box, and when he laughed everybody

thought themselves warranted to roar." The author, for the greater part of the evening, was not in the house. It seems a pity that he did not follow up the success of a play which, unlike most " classic " plays, is frequently revived by quite unenterprising managements. His death occurred just over a year after the production.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

or

The Mistakes of a Night

Characters

Sir Charles Marlow	Tony Lumpkin	Miss Neville
Young Marlow (*his Son*)	Diggory	Maid
Hardcastle	Mrs. Hardcastle	Landlords, Servants,
Hastings	Miss Hardcastle	*&c., &c.*

ACT I

SCENE: *A Chamber in an Old-Fashioned House.*

Enter Mrs. Hardcastle *and* Mr. Hardcastle.

Mrs. Hardcastle : I vow, Mr. Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country, but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then, to rub off the rust a little ? There's the two Miss Hoggs and our neighbour, Mrs. Rigsby, go to take a month's polishing every winter.

Hard. : Ay, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them the whole year. I wonder why London cannot keep its own fools at home. In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel faster than a stage-coach. Its fopperies come down, not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.

Mrs. Hard. : Ay, *your* times were fine times, indeed ; you have been telling us of *them* for many a long year. Here we live in an old rumbling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn, but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old Mrs. Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripplegate, the lame dancing-master : And all our entertainment your old stories of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned trumpery.

Hard. : And I love it. I love everything that's old : old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine ; and, I believe, Dorothy (*taking her hand*), you'll own I have been pretty fond of an old wife.

Mrs. Hard. : Lord, Mr. Hardcastle, you're for ever at your Dorothys and your old wifes. You may be a Darby, but I'll be no Joan, I promise you. I'm not so old as you'd make me, by more than one good year. Add twenty to twenty and make money of that.

Hard. : Let me see ; twenty added to twenty, makes just fifty and seven !

Mrs. Hard. : It's false, Mr. Hardcastle : I was but twenty when I was brought to bed of Tony, that I had by Mr. Lumpkin, my first husband ; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

Hard. : Nor ever will I dare answer for him. Ay, you have taught *him* finely !

Mrs. Hard. : No matter, Tony Lumpkin has a good fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a year.

Hard. : Learning, quotha ! A mere composition of tricks and mischief !

Mrs. Hard. : Humour, my dear : nothing but humour. Come, Mr. Hardcastle, you must allow the boy a little humour.

HARD. : I'd sooner allow him a horse-pond ! If burning the footman's shoes, frightening the maids, and worrying the kittens, be humour, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I popped my bald head in Mrs. Frizzle's face !

MRS. HARD. : And am I to blame ? The poor boy was always too sickly to do any good. A school would be his death. When he comes to be a little stronger, who know what a year or two's Latin may do for him ?

HARD. : Latin for him ! A cat and fiddle ! No, no, the ale-house and the stable are the only schools he'll ever go to !

MRS. HARD. : Well, we must not snub the poor boy now, for I believe we shan't have him long among us. Anybody that looks in his face may see he's consumptive.

HARD. : Ay, if growing too fat be one of the symptoms.

MRS. HARD. : He coughs sometimes.

HARD. : Yes, when his liquor goes the wrong way.

MRS. HARD. : I'm actually afraid of his lungs.

HARD. : And truly, so am I ; for he sometimes whoops like a speaking-trumpet (TONY *hallooing behind the scenes.*)—O, there he goes.—A very consumptive figure, truly !

Enter TONY, *crossing the stage.*

MRS. HARD. : Tony, where are you going, my charmer ? Won't you give papa and I a little of your company, lovey ?

TONY : I'm in haste, mother, I cannot stay.

MRS. HARD. : You shan't venture out this raw evening, my dear : You look most shockingly.

TONY : I can't stay, I tell you. The Three Pigeons expects me down every moment. There's some fun going forward.

HARD. : Ay ; the ale-house, the old place : I thought so.

MRS. HARD. : A low, paltry set of fellows.

TONY : Not so low, neither. There's Dick Muggins the exciseman, Jack Slang the horse doctor, Little Aminadab that grinds the music-box, and Tom Twist that spins the pewter platter.

MRS. HARD. : Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night, at least.

TONY : As for disappointing *them*, I should not much mind ; but I can't abide to disappoint *myself !*

MRS. HARD. (*detaining him*) : You shan't go.

TONY : I will, I tell you.

MRS. HARD. : I say you shan't.

TONY : We'll see which is strongest, you or I.

[*Exit hauling her out.*

HARDCASTLE *solus.*

HARD. : Ay, there goes a pair that only spoil each other. But is not the whole age in a combination to drive sense and discretion out of doors ? There's my pretty darling Kate ; the fashions of the times have almost infected her too. By living a year or two in town, she is as fond of gauze, and French frippery as the best of them.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

HARD. : Blessings on my pretty innocence ! Dressed out as my usual, my Kate ! Goodness ! What a quantity of superfluous silk hast thou got about thee, girl ! I could never teach the fools of this age, that the indigent world could be clothed out of the trimmings of the vain.

MISS HARD. : You know our agreement, sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner ; and in the evening, I put on my housewife's dress, to please you.

HARD. : Well, remember, I insist on the terms of our agreement ; and, by-the-bye, I believe I shall have occasion to try your obedience this very evening.

MISS HARD. : I protest, sir, I don't comprehend your meaning.

HARD. : Then to be plain with you, Kate, I expect the young gentleman I have chosen to be your husband from town this very day. I have his father's letter in which he informs me his son is set out, and that he intends to follow himself shortly after.

MISS HARD. : Indeed ! I wish I had known something of this before. Bless me, how shall I behave ? It's a thousand to one I shan't like him ; our meeting will be so formal, and so like a thing of business, that I shall find no room for friendship or esteem.

HARD. : Depend upon it, child, I'll never control your choice ; but Mr. Marlow, whom I have pitched upon, is the son of my old friend, Sir Charles Marlow, of whom you have heard me talk so often. The young gentleman has been bred a scholar, and is designed for an employment in the service of his country. I am told he's a man of an excellent understanding.

MISS HARD. : Is he ?

HARD. : Very generous.

MISS HARD. : I believe I shall like him.

HARD. : Young and brave.

MISS HARD. : I'm sure I shall like him.

HARD. : And very handsome.

MISS HARD. : My dear papa, say no more (*kissing his hand*), he's mine, I'll have him !

HARD. : And, to crown all, Kate, he's one of the most bashful and reserved young fellows in all the world.

MISS HARD. : Eh ! you have frozen me to death again. That word reserved has undone all the rest of his accomplishments. A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband.

HARD. : On the contrary, modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues. It was the very feature in his character that first struck me.

MISS HARD. : He must have more striking features to catch me, I promise you. However, if he be so young, so handsome, and so everything, as you mention, I believe he'll do still. I think I'll have him.

HARD. : Ay, Kate, but there is still an obstacle. It is more than an even wager, he may not have *you*.

MISS HARD. : My dear papa, why will you mortify one so ?—Well, if he refuses, instead of breaking my heart at his indifference, I'll only break my glass for its flattery. Set my cap to some newer fashion, and look out for some less difficult admirer.

HARD. : Bravely resolved ! In the meantime I'll go prepare the servants for his reception ; as we seldom see company, they want as much training as a company of recruits the first day's muster. [*Exit.*

MISS HARDCASTLE *sola.*

MISS HARD. : Lud, this news of papa's puts me all in a flutter. Young, handsome ; these he put last ; but I put them foremost. Sensible, good-natur'd ; I like all that. But then reserved, and sheepish, that's much against him. Yet can't he be cured of his timidity, by being taught to be proud of his wife.

Yes, and can't I— But I vow I'm disposing of the husband before I have secured the lover !

Enter Miss Neville.

Miss Hard. : I'm glad you're come, Neville, my dear. Tell me, Constance, how do I look this evening ? Is there anything whimsical about me ? Is it one of my well-looking days, child ? Am I in face to-day ?

Miss Neville : Perfectly, my dear. Yet, now I look again—bless me !—sure no accident has happened among the canary birds or the goldfishes ? Has your brother or the cat been meddling ? Or has the last novel been too moving ?

Miss Hard. : No ; nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out—I have been threatened with a lover !

Miss Neville : And his name——

Miss Hard. : Is Marlow.

Miss Neville : Indeed !

Miss Hard. : The son of Sir Charles Marlow.

Miss Neville : As I live, the most intimate friend of Mr. Hastings, *my* admirer. They are never asunder. I believe you must have seen him when we lived in town.

Miss Hard. : Never.

Miss Neville : He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue, he is the modestest man alive : but his acquaintance give him a very different character among creatures of another stamp : you understand me ?

Miss Hard. : An odd character, indeed ! I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do ? Pshaw, think no more of him, but trust to occurrences for success. But how goes on your own affair, my dear ? Has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony, as usual ?

Miss Neville : I have just come from one of our agreeable *tête-à-têtes*. She has been saying a hundred tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

Miss Hard. : And her partiality is such, that she actually thinks him so. A fortune like yours is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the sole management of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go out of the family.

Miss Neville : A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists in jewels, is no such mighty temptation. But, at any rate, if my dear Hastings be but constant, I make no doubt to be too hard for her at last, However, I let her suppose that I am in love with her son, and she never once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

Miss Hard. : My good brother holds out stoutly. I could almost love him for hating you so.

Miss Neville : It is a good-natur'd creature at bottom, and I'm sure would wish to see me married to anybody but himself. But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoon's walk through the improvements. *Allons*. Courage is necessary, as our affairs are critical.

Miss Hard. : Would it were bed-time and all were well. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE: *An Ale-house Room. Several shabby fellows, with punch and tobacco.* Tony *at the head of the table, a little higher than the rest : a mallet in his hand.*

Omnes. : Hurrea, hurrea, hurrea, bravo !

First Fellow : Now, gentlemen, silence for a song.
The 'Squire is going to knock himself down for a song.

OMNES. : Ay, a song, a song.

TONY : Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made upon this ale-house, the Three Pigeons.

SONG.

Let school-masters puzzle their brain,
With grammar, and nonsense, and learning ;
Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,
Gives genus *a better discerning,*
Let them brag of their Heathenish Gods,
Their Lethes, their Styxes, and Stygians ;
Their Quis, and their Quæs, and their Quods,
They're all but a parcel of Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll !

When Methodist preachers come down,
A-preaching that drinking is sinful,
I'll wager the rascals a crown,
They always preach best with a skinful.
But when you come down with your pence,
For a slice of their scurvy religion,
I'll leave it to all men of sense,
But you, my good friend, are the pigeon.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll !

Then come, put the jorum about,
And let us be merry and clever,
Our hearts and our liquors are stout,
Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons for ever.
Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons :
But of all the birds in the air,
Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.
Toroddle, toroddle, toroll !

OMNES. : Bravo, bravo !

FIRST FELLOW : The 'Squire has got spunk in him.

SECOND FELLOW : I loves to hear him sing, bekeays, he never gives us nothing that's *low*.

THIRD FELLOW : O damn anything that's *low*, I cannot bear it !

FOURTH FELLOW : The genteel thing is the genteel thing at any time. If so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly.

THIRD FELLOW : I like the maxum of it, Master Muggins. What, though I am obligated to dance a bear, a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelest of tunes. Water Parted, or the minuet in Ariadne.

SECOND FELLOW : What a pity it is the 'Squire is not come to his own. It would be well for all the publicans within ten miles round of him.

TONY : Ecod, and so it would, Master Slang. I'd then show what it was to keep choice of company.

SECOND FELLOW : O, he takes after his own father for that. To be sure, old 'Squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. For winding the straight horn, or beating a thicket for a hare, or a wench, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place, that he kept the best horses, dogs, and girls in the whole county.

TONY : Ecod, and when I'm of age I'll be no bastard, I promise you. I have

been thinking of Bet Bouncer and the miller's grey mare to begin with. But come, my boys, drink about and be merry, for you pay no reckoning. Well, Stingo, what's the matter ?

Enter LANDLORD.

LANDLORD : There be two gentlemen in a post-chaise at the door. They have lost their way upo' the forest ; and they are talking something about Mr. Hardcastle.

TONY : As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister. Do they seem to be Londoners ?

LANDLORD : I believe they may. They look woundily like Frenchmen.

TONY : Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set them right in a twinkling. (*Exit* LANDLORD.) Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, step down for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. [*Exeunt Mob.*

TONY *solus.*

TONY : Father-in-law has been calling me whelp, and hound, this half year. Now, if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumbletonian. But then I'm afraid—afraid of what? I shall soon be worth fifteen hundred a year, and let him frighten me out of *that* if he can !

Enter LANDLORD, *conducting* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS.

MARLOW : What a tedious uncomfortable day have we had of it ! We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come above threescore !

HASTINGS : And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of yours, that would not let us enquire more frequently on the way.

MARLOW : I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet ; and often stand the chance of an unmannerly answer.

HASTINGS : At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer.

TONY : No offence, gentlemen. But I'm told you have been enquiring for one Mr. Hardcastle, in these parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in ?

HASTINGS : Not in the least, sir, but should thank you for information.

TONY : Nor the way you came ?

HASTINGS : No, sir, but if you can inform us——

TONY : Why, gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, nor where you are, nor the road you came, the first thing I have to inform you is, that —you have lost your way.

MARLOW : We wanted no ghost to tell us that.

TONY : Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold as to ask the place from whence you came ?

MARLOW : That's not necessary towards directing us where we are to go.

TONY : No offence ; but question for question is all fair, you know. Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle a cross-grained, old-fashioned, whimsical fellow with an ugly face ; a daughter, and a pretty son ?

HASTINGS : We have not seen the gentleman, but he has the family you mention.

TONY : The daughter, a tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative maypole—— The son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that everybody is fond of !

MARLOW : Our information differs in this. The daughter is said to be well-bred and beautiful ; the son, an awkward booby, reared up and spoiled at his mother's apron-string.

TONY : He-he-hem—then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr. Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

HASTINGS : Unfortunate !

TONY : It's a damned long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr. Hardcastle's. (*Winking upon the* LANDLORD.) Mr. Hardcastle's of Quagmire Marsh, you understand me.

LANDLORD : Master Hardcastle's ! Lack-a-daisy, my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong ! When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have crossed down Squash Lane.

MARLOW : Cross down Squash Lane !

LANDLORD : Then you were to keep straight forward, until you came to four roads.

MARLOW : Come to where four roads meet !

TONY : Ay, but you must be sure to take only one of them.

MARLOW : O, sir, you're facetious !

TONY : Then, keeping to the right, you are to go sideways till you come upon Crack-skull common : there you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward, till you come to farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the farmer's barn you are to turn to the right, and then to the left, and then to the right about again, till you find out the old mill——

MARLOW : Zounds, man ! we could as soon find out the longitude !

HASTINGS : What's to be done, Marlow ?

MARLOW : This house promises but a poor reception, though, perhaps, the landlord can accommodate us.

LANDLORD : Alack, master, we have but one spare bed in the whole house.

TONY : And to my knowledge, that's taken up by three lodgers already. (*After a pause, in which the rest seem disconcerted.*) I have hit it. Don't you think, Stingo, our landlady could accommodate the gentlemen by the fire-side, with——three chairs and a bolster ?

HASTINGS : I hate sleeping by the fire-side.

MARLOW : And I detest your three chairs and a bolster.

TONY : You do, do you !—then let me see—what—if you go on a mile further, to the Buck's Head ; the old Buck's Head on the hill, one of the best inns in the whole country ?

HASTINGS : Oh, oh ! so we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

LANDLORD (*apart to* TONY) : Sure, you ben't sending them to your father's as an inn, be you ?

TONY : Mum, you fool, you. Let *them* find that out. (*To them.*) You have only to keep on straight forward, till you come to a large old house by the road-side. You'll see a pair of large horns over the door. That's the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

HASTINGS : Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't miss the way ?

TONY : No, no : But I tell you though, the landlord is rich, and going to leave off business ; so he wants to be thought a gentleman, saving your presence, he ! he ! he ! He'll be for giving you his company, and, ecod, if you mind him, he'll persuade you that his mother was an alderman, and his aunt a justice of the peace !

LANDLORD : A troublesome old blade, to be sure ; but 'a keeps as good wines and beds as any in the whole country.

MARLOW : Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want no further connection. We are to turn to the right, did you say ?

TONY : No, no ; straight forward. I'll just step myself, and show you a piece of the way. (*To the* LANDLORD.) Mum.

LANDLORD : Ah, bless your heart, for a sweet, pleasant——damned mischievous son of a whore. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE—*An old-fashioned House.*

Enter HARDCASTLE *followed by three or four awkward* SERVANTS.

HARD. : Well, I hope you're perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places, and can show that you have been used to good company, without ever stirring from home.

OMNES. : Ay, ay.

HARD. : When company comes, you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frightened rabbits in a warren.

OMNES. : No, no.

HARD. : You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn are to make a show at the side-table ; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind *my* chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger ; and from your head, you blockhead, you. See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

DIGGORY : Ay, mind how I hold them. I learned to hold my hands this way, when I was upon drill for the militia. And so being upon drill——

HARD. : You must not be so talkative, Diggory. You must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk, and not think of talking ; you must see us drink and not think of drinking ; you must see us eat and not think of eating.

DIGGORY : By the laws, your worship, that's parfectly unpossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forward, ecod, he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

HARD. : Blockhead ! Is not a bellyful in the kitchen as good as a bellyful in the parlour ? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

DIGGORY : Ecod, I thank your worship, I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

HARD. : Diggory, you are too talkative. Then, if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a-laughing, as if you made part of the company.

DIGGORY : Then, ecod, your worship must not tell the story of Ould Grouse in the gun-room : I can't help laughing at that—he ! he ! he !—for the soul of me ! We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha ! ha ! ha !

HARD. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave ? A glass of wine, sir, if you please (to DIGGORY)—Eh, why don't you move ?

DIGGORY : Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upo' the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion.

HARD. : What, will nobody move ?

FIRST SERVANT : I'm not to leave this pleace.

SECOND SERVANT ; I'm sure it's no pleace of mine.

THIRD SERVANT : Nor mine for sartain.

DIGGORY : Wauns, and I'm sure it canna be mine.

HARD. : You numskulls ! and so while, like your betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved. O, you dunces ! I find I must begin all over again.—But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard ? To your posts, you blockheads ! I'll go in the meantime and give my old friend's son a hearty reception at the gate. [*Exit* HARDCASTLE.

DIGGORY : By the elevens, my pleace is gone quite out of my head !

ROGER : I know that my pleace is to be everywhere !

FIRST SERVANT : Where the devil is mine ?

SECOND SERVANT : My pleace is to be nowhere at all ; and so I ze go about my business ! [*Exeunt* SERVANTS, *running about as if frighted, different ways.*

Enter SERVANTS *with Candles, showing in* MARLOW *and* HASTINGS.

SERVANT : Welcome, gentlemen, very welcome. This way.

HASTINGS : After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house ; antique but creditable.

MARLOW : The usual fate of a large mansion. Having first ruined the master by good housekeeping, it at last comes to levy contributions as an inn.

HASTINGS : As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to pay all these fineries. I have often seen a good sideboard, or a marble chimney-piece, though not actually put in the bill, inflame a reckoning confoundedly.

MARLOW : Travellers, George, must pay in all places. The only difference is, that in good inns, you pay dearly for luxuries ; in bad inns, you are fleeced and starved.

HASTINGS : You have lived pretty much among them. In truth, I have been often surprised, that you who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense, and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire a requisite share of assurance.

MARLOW : The Englishman's malady. But tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of ? My life has been chiefly spent in a college, or an inn, in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation that chiefly teach men confidence. I don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single modest woman—except my mother—but among females of another class, you know—

HASTINGS : Ay, among them you are impudent enough of all conscience !

MARLOW : They are of *us*, you know.

HASTINGS : But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler ; you look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.

MARLOW : Why, man, that's because I *do* want to steal out of the room. Faith, I have often formed a resolution to break the ice, and rattle away at any rate. But I don't know how, a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has totally overset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty, but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence.

HASTINGS : If you could but say half the fine things to them that I have heard you lavish upon the barmaid of an inn, or even a college bedmaker—

MARLOW : Why, George, I can't say fine things to them. They freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle. But to me, a modest woman, dressed out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation.

HASTINGS : Ha ! ha ! ha ! At this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry !

MARLOW : Never, unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy. If, indeed, like an Eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers and cousins, and at last to blurt out the broad staring question of, *madam, will you marry me ?* No, no, that's a strain much above me, I assure you !

HASTINGS : I pity you. But how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father ?

MARLOW : As I behave to all other ladies. Bow very low. Answer yes, or no, to all her demands—But for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face, till I see my father's again.

HASTINGS : I'm surprised that one who is so warm a friend can be so cool a lover.

MARLOW : To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement down was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you, the family don't know you, as my friend you are sure of a reception, and let honour do the rest.

HASTINGS : My dear Marlow ! But I'll suppress the emotion. Were I a wretch, meanly seeking to carry off a fortune, you should be the last man in the world I would apply to for assistance. But Miss Neville's person is all I ask, and that is mine, both from her deceased father's consent and her own inclination.

MARLOW : Happy man ! You have talents and art to captivate any woman. I'm doomed to adore the sex, and yet to converse with the only part of it I despise. This stammer in my address, and this awkward prepossessing visage of mine, can never permit me to soar above the reach of a milliner's apprentice, or one of the duchesses of Drury Lane. Pshaw ! this fellow here to interrupt us.

Enter HARDCASTLE.

HARD. : Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr. Marlow ? Sir, you're heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire. I like to give them a hearty reception in the old style at my gate. I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

MARLOW (*aside*) : He has got our names from the servants already. (*To him.*) We approve your caution and hospitality, sir. (*To* HASTINGS.) I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the morning. I am grown confoundly ashamed of mine.

HARD. : I beg, Mr. Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house.

HASTINGS : I fancy, George, you're right ; the first blow is half the battle. I intend opening the campaign with the white and gold.

HARD. : Mr. Marlow—Mr. Hastings—gentlemen—pray be under no constraint in this house. This is Liberty Hall, gentlemen. You may do just as you please here.

MARLOW : Yet, George if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is over. I think to reserve the embroidery to secure a retreat.

HARD. : Your talking of a retreat, Mr. Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when we went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison——

MARLOW : Don't you think the *ventre d'or* waistcoat will do with the plain brown.

HARD. : He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men——

HASTINGS : I think not : brown and yellow mix but very poorly.

HARD. : I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men——

MARLOW : The girls like finery.

HARD. : Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. " Now," says the Duke of Marlborough to George Brooks, that stood next to him—you must have

heard of George Brooks ; " I'll pawn my Dukedom," says he, " but I take that garrison without spilling a drop of blood ! " So——

MARLOW : What, my good friend, if you gave us a glass of punch in the meantime, it would help us to carry on the siege with vigour.

HARD. : Punch, sir !——(*aside.*) This is the most unaccountable kind of modesty I ever met with !

MARLOW : Yes, sir, punch ! A glass of warm punch, after our journey, will be comfortable. This is Liberty Hall, you know.

HARD. : Here's cup, sir.

MARLOW (*aside*) : So this fellow, in his Liberty Hall, will only let us have just what he pleases.

HARD. (*taking the cup*) : I hope you'll find it to your mind. I have prepared it with my own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, sir ? Here, Mr. Marlow, here is our better acquaintance ! [*Drinks.*

MARLOW (*aside*) : A very impudent fellow this ! but he's a character, and I'll humour him a little. Sir, my service to you. [*Drinks.*

HASTINGS (*aside*) : I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper, before he has learned to be a gentleman.

MARLOW : From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then, at elections, I suppose ?

HARD. : No, sir, I have long given that work over. Since our betters have hit upon the expedient of electing each other, there's no business *for us that sell ale.*

HASTINGS : So, then you have no turn for politics, I find.

HARD. : Not in the least. There was a time, indeed, I fretted myself about the mistakes of government, like other people ; but finding myself every day grow more angry, and the government growing no better, I left it to mend itself. Since that, I no more trouble my head about *Heyder Ally, Ally Cawn,* than about *Ally Croker.* Sir, my service to you.

HASTINGS : So that, with eating above stairs, and drinking below, with receiving your friends within, and amusing them without, you lead a good pleasant bustling life of it.

HARD. : I do stir about a great deal, that's certain. Half the differences of the parish are adjusted in this very parlour.

MARLOW (*after drinking*) : And you have an argument in your cup, old gentleman, better than any in Westminster Hall.

HARD. : Ay, young gentleman, that, and a little philosophy.

MARLOW (*aside*) : Well, this is the first time I ever heard of an innkeeper's philosophy.

HASTINGS : So then, like an experienced general, you attack them on every quarter. If you find their reason manageable, you attack it with your philosophy ; if you find they have no reason, you attack them with this. Here's your health, my philosopher. [*Drinks.*

HARD. : Good, very good, thank you ; ha ! ha ! Your generalship puts me in mind of Prince Eugene, when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade. You shall hear.

MARLOW : Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I believe it's almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper ?

HARD. : For supper, sir——(*aside.*) Was ever such a request to a man in his own house !

MARLOW : Yes, sir, supper, sir ; I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make devilish work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

HARD. (*aside*) : Such a brazen dog sure never my eyes beheld. (*To him.*) Why,

really, sir, as for supper I can't well tell. My Dorothy, and the cook maid, settle these things between them. I leave these kind of things entirely to them.

MARLOW : You, do, do you ?

HARD. : Entirely. By-the-bye, I believe they are in actual consultation upon what's for supper this moment in the kitchen.

MARLOW : Then I beg they'll admit *me* as one of their privy council. It's a way I have got. When I travel, I always choose to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence, I hope, sir.

HARD. : O, no, sir, none in the least ; yet, I don't know how : our Bridget, the cook maid, is not very communicative upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

HASTINGS : Let's see your list of the larder, then. I ask it as a favour. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

MARLOW (*to* HARDCASTLE, *who looks at them with surprise*) : Sir, he's very right, and it's my way, too.

HARD. : Sir, you have a right to command here. Here, Roger, bring us the bill of fare for to-night's supper. I believe it's drawn out. Your manner, Mr. Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, Colonel Wallop. It was a saying of his, that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it.

HASTINGS (*aside*) : All upon the high ropes ! His uncle a colonel ! We shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of peace. But let's hear the bill of fare.

MARLOW (*perusing*) : What's here ? For the first course ; for the second course ; for the dessert. The devil, sir, do you think we have brought down the whole Joiner's Company, or the Corporation of Bedford, to eat up such a supper ? Two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

HASTINGS : But let's hear it.

MARLOW (*reading*) : For the first course at the top, a pig, and prune sauce.

HASTINGS : Damn your pig, I say !

MARLOW : And damn your prune sauce, say I !

HARD. : And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig, with prune sauce, is very good eating.

MARLOW : At the bottom, a calf's tongue and brains.

HASTINGS : Let your brains be knocked out, my good sir ; I don't like them.

MARLOW : Or you may clap them on a plate by themselves, I do.

HARD. (*aside*) : Their impudence confounds me. (*To them*). Gentlemen, you are my guests, make what alterations you please. Is there anything else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen ?

MARLOW : Item. A pork pie, a boiled rabbit and sausages, a florentine, a shaking pudding, and a dish of tiff—taff—taffety cream !

HASTINGS : Confound your made dishes, I shall be as much at a loss in this house as at a green and yellow dinner at the French ambassador's table. I'm for plain eating.

HARD. : I'm sorry, gentlemen, that I have nothing you like, but if there be anything you have a particular fancy to——

MARLOW : Why, really, sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite, that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please. So much for supper. And now to see that our beds are aired, and properly taken care of.

HARD. : I entreat you'll leave all that to me. You shall not stir a step.

MARLOW : Leave that to you ! I protest, sir, you must excuse me, I always look to these things myself.

HARD. : I must insist, sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head.

MARLOW : You see I'm resolved on it.—(*Aside.*) A very troublesome fellow this, as ever I met with.

HARD. : Well, sir, I'm resolved at least to attend you.—(*Aside.*) This may be modern modesty, but I never saw anything look so like old-fashioned impudence. [*Exeunt* MARLOW *and* HARDCASTLE.

HASTINGS *solus.*

HASTINGS : So I find this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry at those assiduities which are meant to please him ! Miss Neville, by all that's happy !

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

MISS NEVILLE : My dear Hastings ! To what unexpected good fortune ? to what accident am I to ascribe this happy meeting ?

HASTINGS : Rather let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dearest Constance at an inn.

MISS NEVILLE : An inn ! sure you mistake ! my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think this house an inn ?

HASTINGS : My friend, Mr. Marlow, with whom I came down, and I, have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow whom we accidentally met at a house hard by directed us hither.

MISS NEVILLE : Certainly it must be one of my hopeful cousin's tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often, ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !

HASTINGS : He whom your aunt intends for you ? He of whom I have such just apprehensions ?

MISS NEVILLE : You have nothing to fear from him, I assure you. You'd adore him if you knew how heartily he despises me. My aunt knows it too, and has undertaken to court me for him, and actually begins to think she has made a conquest.

HASTINGS : Thou dear dissembler ! You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with their journey, but they'll soon be refreshed ; and then if my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we shall soon be landed in France, where even among slaves the laws of marriage are respected.

MISS NEVILLE : I have often told you, that though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by my uncle, the India Director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I'm very near succeeding. The instant they are put into my possession you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours.

HASTINGS : Perish the baubles ! Your person is all I desire. In the meantime, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake. I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house before our plan was ripe for execution.

MISS NEVILLE : But how shall we keep him in the deception ? Miss Hardcastle is just returned from walking ; what if we still continue to deceive him ?—This, this way——— [*They confer.*

Enter MARLOW.

MARLOW : The assiduities of these good people tease me beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners to leave me alone, and so he claps not only himself, but his old-fashioned wife on my back. They talk of coming to sup with us, too ; and then, I suppose, we are to run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family.—What have we got here ?——

HASTINGS : My dear Charles ! Let me congratulate you !—The most fortunat accident !—Who do you think is just alighted ?

MARLOW : Cannot guess.

HASTINGS : Our mistresses, boy, Miss Hardcastle and Miss Neville. Give m leave to introduce Miss Constance Neville to your acquaintance. Happenin to dine in the neighbourhood, they called, on their return to take fresh horse here. Miss Hardcastle has just stept into the next room, and will be back in a instant. Wasn't it lucky ? eh !

MARLOW (*aside*) : I have just been mortified enough of all conscience, and her comes something to complete my embarrassment.

HASTINGS : Well ! but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in the world ?

MARLOW : Oh ! yes. Very fortunate—a most joyful encounter——But ou dresses, George, you know, are in disorder——What if we should postpon the happiness till to-morrow ?——To-morrow at her own house——It wi be every bit as convenient——And rather more respectful——To-morrow le it be. [*Offering to g*

MISS NEVILLE : By no means, sir. Your ceremony will displease her. The dis order of your dress will shew the ardour of your impatience. Besides, sh knows you are in the house, and will permit you to see her.

MARLOW : O ! the devil ! how shall I support it ? Hem ! hem ! Hastings, yo must not go. You are to assist me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridicu lous. Yet, hang it ! I'll take courage. Hem !

HASTINGS : Pshaw, man ! it's but the first plunge, and all's over. She's but woman, you know.

MARLOW : And of all women, she that I dread most to encounter !

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, *as returned from walking, a Bonnet, &c.*

HASTINGS (*introducing them*) : Miss Hardcastle, Mr. Marlow, I'm proud bringing two persons of such merit together, that only want to know, t esteem each other.

MISS HARD. (*aside*) : Now, for meeting my modest gentleman with a demur face, and quite in his own manner. (*After a pause, in which he appears very uneas and disconcerted.*) I'm glad of your safe arrival, sir——I'm told you had som accidents by the way.

MARLOW : Only a few, madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, madam, a good man accidents, but should be sorry—madam—or rather glad of any accidents- that are so agreeably concluded. Hem !

HASTINGS (*to him*) : You never spoke better in your whole life. Keep it up, an I'll insure you the victory.

MISS HARD. : I'm afraid you flatter, sir. You that have seen so much of th finest company can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of th country.

MARLOW (*gathering courage*) : I have lived, indeed, in the world, madam ; bu I have kept very little company. I have been but an observer upon lif madam, while others were enjoying it.

MISS NEVILLE : But that, I am told, is the way to enjoy it at last.

HASTINGS (*to him*) : Cicero never spoke better. Once more, and you are co firmed in assurance for ever.

MARLOW (*to him*) : Hem ! Stand by me, then, and when I'm down, throw in word or two to set me up again.

MISS HARD. : An observer, like you, upon life, were, I fear, disagreeabl employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approv

MARLOW : Pardon me, madam. I was always willing to be amused. The fol of most people is rather an object of mirth than uneasiness.

HASTINGS (*to him*) : Bravo, bravo. Never spoke so well in your whole life. Well, Miss Hardcastle, I see that you and Mr. Marlow are going to be very good company. I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview.

MARLOW : Not in the least, Mr. Hastings. We like your company of all things. (*To him*). Zounds ! George, sure you won't go ? How can you leave us ?

HASTINGS : Our presence will but spoil conversation, so we'll retire to the next room. (*To him.*) You don't consider, man, that we are to manage a little *tête-à-tête* of our own. [*Exeunt.*

MISS HARD. (*after a pause*) : But you have not been wholly an observer, I presume, sir. The ladies, I should hope, have employed some part of your addresses.

MARLOW (*relapsing into timidity*) : Pardon me, madam, I—I—I—as yet have studied—only—to—deserve them.

MISS HARD. : And that some say is the very worst way to obtain them.

MARLOW : Perhaps so, madam. But I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex.——But I'm afraid I grow tiresome.

MISS HARD. : Not at all, sir ; there is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself : I could hear it for ever. Indeed, I have often been surprised how a man of *sentiment* could ever admire those light airy pleasures, where nothing reaches the heart.

MARLOW : It's—a disease—of the mind, madam. In the variety of tastes there must be some who, wanting a relish for—um-a-um.

MISS HARD. : I understand you, sir. There must be some, who, wanting a relish for refined pleasures, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting.

MARLOW : My meaning, madam, but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing—a——

MISS HARD. (*aside*) : Who could ever suppose this fellow impudent upon some occasions. (*To him.*) You were going to observe, sir——

MARLOW : I was observing, madam——I protest, madam, I forget what I was going to observe.

MISS HARD. (*aside*) : I vow and so do I. (*To him.*) You were observing, sir, that in this age of hypocrisy—something about hypocrisy, sir.

MARLOW : Yes, madam. In this age of hypocrisy, there are few who upon strict enquiry do not—a—a—a——

MISS HARD. : I understand you perfectly, sir.

MARLOW (*aside*) : Egad ! and that's more than I do myself !

MISS HARD. : You mean that in this hypocritical age there are few that do not condemn in public what they practise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

MARLOW : True, madam ; those who have most virtue in their mouths, have least of it in their bosoms. But I'm sure I tire you, madam.

MISS HARD. : Not in the least, sir ; there's something so agreeable and spirited in your manner, such life and force——pray, sir, go on.

MARLOW : Yes, madam. I was saying——that there are some occasions——when a total want of courage, madam, destroys all the——and puts us——upon a——a——a——

MISS HARD. : I agree with you entirely, a want of courage upon some occasions assumes the appearance of ignorance, and betrays us when we most want to excel. I beg you'll proceed.

MARLOW : Yes, madam. Morally speaking, madam——but I see Miss Neville expecting us in the next room. I would not intrude for the world.

MISS HARD. : I protest, sir, I never was more agreeably entertained in all my life. Pray go on.

MARLOW : Yes, madam. I was——But she beckons us to join her. Madam, shall I do myself the honour to attend you ?

MISS HARD. : Well then, I'll follow.

MARLOW (*aside*) : This pretty smooth dialogue has done for me. [*Exit.*

MISS HARDCASTLE *sola.*

MISS HARD. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! Was there ever such a sober sentimental interview ? I'm certain he scarce looked in my face the whole time. Yet the fellow, but for his unaccountable bashfulness, is pretty well, too. He has good sense, but then so buried in his fears, that it fatigues one more than ignorance. If I could teach him a little confidence, it would be doing somebody that I know of a piece of service. But who is that somebody ?—that, faith, is a question I can scarce answer. [*Exit.*

Enter TONY *and* MISS NEVILLE, *followed by* MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* HASTINGS.

TONY : What do you follow me for, cousin Con ? I wonder you're not ashamed to be so very engaging.

MISS NEVILLE : I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame.

TONY : Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me, though ; but it won't do. I tell you, cousin, Con, it won't do, so I beg you'll keep your distance, I want no nearer relationship.

[*She follows coquetting him to the back scene.*

MRS. HARD. : Well ! I vow, Mr. Hastings, you are very entertaining. There's nothing in the world I love to talk of so much as London, and the fashions, though I was never there myself.

HASTINGS : Never there ! You amaze me ! From your air and manner, I concluded you had been bred all your life either at Ranelagh, St. James's, or Tower Wharf.

MRS. HARD. : O ! sir, you're only pleased to say so. We country persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighbouring rustics ; but who can have a manner, that has never seen the Pantheon, the Grotto Gardens, the Borough, and such places where the nobility chiefly resort ? All I can do is to enjoy London at second-hand. I take care to know every *tête-à-tête* from the Scandalous Magazine, and have all the fashions as they come out, in a letter from the two Miss Rickets of Crooked Lane. Pray how do you like this head, Mr. Hastings ?

HASTINGS : Extremely elegant and *degagée*, upon my word, madam. Your friseur is a Frenchman, I suppose ?

MRS. HARD. : I protest, I dressed it myself from a print in the Ladies' Memorandum-book for the last year.

HASTINGS : Indeed. Such a head in a side-box, at the Play-house, would draw as many gazers as my Lady Mayoress at a City Ball.

MRS. HARD. : I vow, since inoculation began, there is no such thing to be seen as a plain woman ; so one must dress a little particular or one may escape in the crowd.

HASTINGS : But that can never be your case, madam, in any dress ! (*Bowing.*)

MRS. HARD. : Yet, what signifies *my* dressing when I have such a piece of antiquity by my side as Mr. Hardcastle : all I can say will never argue down a single button from his clothes. I have often wanted him to throw off his great flaxen wig, and where he was bald, to plaster it over like my Lord Pately, with powder.

HASTINGS : You are right, madam ; for, as among the ladies there are none ugly, so among the men there are none old.

MRS. HARD. : But what do you think his answer was ? Why, with his usual Gothic vivacity, he said I only wanted him to throw off his wig to convert it into a *tête* for my own wearing !

HASTINGS : Intolerable ! At your age you may wear what you please, and it must become you.

MRS. HARD. : Pray, Mr. Hastings, what do you take to be the most fashionable age about town ?

HASTINGS : Some time ago forty was all the mode ; but I'm told the ladies intend to bring up fifty for the ensuing winter.

MRS. HARD. : Seriously. Then I shall be too young for the fashion !

HASTINGS : No lady begins now to put on jewels till she's past forty. For instance, miss there, in a polite circle, would be considered as a child, as a mere maker of samplers.

MRS. HARD. : And yet Mrs. Niece thinks herself as much a woman, and is a fond of jewels as the oldest of us all.

HASTINGS : Your niece, is she ? And that young gentleman, a brother of yours, I should presume ?

MRS. HARD. : My son, sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They fall in and out ten times a day, as if they were man and wife already (*To them.*) Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you saying to your cousin Constance, this evening ?

TONY : I have been saying no soft things ; but that it's very hard to be followed about so. Ecod ! I've not a place in the house now that's left to myself but the stable.

MRS. HARD. : Never mind him, Con, my dear. He's in another story behind your back.

MISS NEVILLE : There's something generous in my cousin's manner. He falls out before faces to be forgiven in private.

TONY : That's a damned confounded——crack.

MRS. HARD. : Ah ! he's a sly one. Don't you think they're like each other about the mouth, Mr. Hastings ? The Blenkisop mouth to a T. They're of a size, too. Back to back, my pretties, that Mr. Hastings may see you. Come, Tony.

TONY : You had as good not make me, I tell you. [*Measuring.*

MISS NEVILLE : O lud ! he has almost cracked my head.

MRS. HARD. : O, the monster ! For shame, Tony. You a man, and behave so !

TONY : If I'm a man, let me have my fortin. Ecod ! I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

MRS. HARD. : Is this, ungrateful boy, all that I'm to get for the pains I have taken in your education ? I that have rocked you in your cradle, and fed that pretty mouth with a spoon ! Did not I work that waistcoat to make you genteel ? Did not I prescribe for you every day, and weep while the receipt was operating ?

TONY : Ecod ! you had reason to weep, for you have been dosing me ever since I was born. I have gone through every receipt in the complete housewife ten times over ; and you have thoughts of coursing me through *Quincy* next spring. But, ecod ! I tell you, I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

MRS. HARD. : Wasn't it all for your good, viper ? Wasn't it all for your good ?

TONY : I wish you'd let me and my good alone, then. Snubbing this way when I'm in spirits. If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself ; not to keep dinging it, dinging it into one so.

MRS. HARD. : That's false ; I never see you when you're in spirits. No, Tony, you then go to the ale-house or kennel. I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable, wild notes, unfeeling monster !

TONY : Ecod ! Mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

MRS. HARD. : Was ever the like ? But I see he wants to break my heart, I see h does.

HASTINGS : Dear madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a litt I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

MRS. HARD. : Well ! I must retire. Come, Constance, my love. You see, M Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation. Was ever poor woman so plagu with a dear, sweet, pretty, provoking, undutiful boy.

[*Exeunt* MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* MISS NEVILL HASTINGS, TONY.

TONY (*singing*) : *There was a young man riding by, and fain would have h will. Rang do didlo dee.* Don't mind her. Let her cry. It's the comfort of h heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book for an hour together, ar they said, they liked the book the better the more it made them cry.

HASTINGS : Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentl man ?

TONY : That's as I find 'um.

HASTINGS : Not to her of your mother's choosing, I dare answer ! And yet sh appears to me a pretty, well-tempered girl.

TONY : That's because you don't know her as well as I. Ecod ! I know eve inch about her ; and there's not a more bitter cantankerous toad in a Christendom !

HASTINGS (*aside*) : Pretty encouragement, this, for a lover.

TONY : I have seen her since the height of that. She has as many tricks as hare in a thicket, or a colt the first day's breaking.

HASTINGS : To me she appears sensible and silent !

TONY : Ay, before company. But when she's with her playmates she's as lou as a hog in a gate.

HASTINGS : But there is a meek modesty about her that charms me.

TONY : Yes, but curb her never so little, she kicks up, and you're flung in ditch.

HASTINGS : Well, but you must allow her a little beauty.—Yes, you must allo her some beauty.

TONY : Bandbox ! She's all a made up thing, mun. Ah ! could you but see B Bouncer of these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod, she has two ey as black as sloes, and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit cushion. She'd ma two of she.

HASTINGS : Well, what say you to a friend that would take this bitter barga off your hands ?

TONY : Anon.

HASTINGS : Would you thank him that would take Miss Neville, and leave you happiness and your dear Betsy ?

TONY : Ay ; but where is there such a friend, for who would take *her ?*

HASTINGS : I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to whip her off to Franc and you shall never hear more of her.

TONY : Assist you ! Ecod, I will, to the last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair horses to your chaise that shall trundle you off in a twinkling, and may b get you a part of her fortin besides, in jewels, that you little dream of.

HASTINGS : My dear 'Squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

TONY : Come along then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you hav done with me. [*Singin*

We are the boys
That fears no noise
Where the thundering cannons roar. [*Exeun*

ACT III

Enter HARDCASTLE *solus.*

HARD. : What could my old friend Sir Charles mean by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town ? To me he appears the most impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy chair by the fireside already. He took off his boots in the parlour, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter.—She will certainly be shocked at it.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE *plainly dressed.*

HARD. : Well, my Kate, I see you have changed your dress as I bid you ; and yet, I believe, there was no great occasion.

MISS HARD. : I find such a pleasure, sir, in obeying your commands, that I take care to observe them without ever debating their propriety.

HARD. : And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my *modest* gentleman to you as a lover to-day.

MISS HARD. : You taught me to expect something extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description !

HARD. : I was never so surprised in my life ! He has quite confounded all my faculties !

MISS HARD. : I never saw anything like it : And a man of the world, too !

HARD. : Ay, he learned it all abroad,—what a fool was I, to think a young man could learn modesty by travelling. He might as soon learn wit at a masquerade.

MISS HARD. : It seems all natural to him.

HARD. : A good deal assisted by bad company and a French dancing-master.

MISS HARD. : Sure, you mistake, papa ! a French dancing-master could never have taught him that timid look,—that awkward address,—that bashful manner——

HARD. : Whose look ? whose manner ? child !

MISS HARD. : Mr. Marlow's : his *mauvaise honte*, his timidity struck me at the first sight.

HARD. : Then your first sight deceived you ; for I think him one of the most brazen first sights that ever astonished my senses !

MISS HARD. : Sure, sir, you rally ! I never saw anyone so modest.

HARD. : And can you be serious ! I never saw such a bouncing swaggering puppy since I was born. Bully Dawson was but a fool to him.

MISS HARD. : Surprising ! He met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

HARD. : He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that made my blood freeze again.

MISS HARD. : He treated me with diffidence and respect ; censured the manners of the age ; admired the prudence of girls that never laughed ; tired me with apologies for being tiresome ; then left the room with a bow, and, madam, I would not for the world detain you.

HARD. : He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before. Asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer Interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun, and when I was in my best story of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, he asked if I had not a good hand at making punch. Yes, Kate, he asked your father if he was a maker of punch !

MISS HARD. : One of us must certainly be mistaken.

HARD. : If he be what he has shown himself, I'm determined he shall never have my consent.

MISS HARD. : And if he be the sullen thing I take him, he shall never have mine.

HARD. : In one thing then we are agreed—to reject him.

MISS HARD. : Yes. But upon conditions. For if you should find him less impudent, and I more presuming ; if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate—I don't know—the fellow is well enough for a man— Certainly we don't meet many such at a horse race in the country.

HARD. : If we should find him so—— But that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business. I'm seldom deceived in that.

MISS HARD. : And yet there may be many good qualities under that first appearance.

HARD. : Ay, when a girl finds a fellow's outside to her taste, she then sets about guessing the rest of his furniture. With her, a smooth face stands for good sense, and a genteel figure for every virtue.

MISS HARD. : I hope, sir, a conversation begun with a compliment to my good sense won't end with a sneer at my understanding ?

HARD. : Pardon me, Kate. But if young Mr. Brazen can find the art of reconciling contradictions, he may please us both, perhaps.

MISS HARD. : And as one of us must be mistaken what if we go to make further discoveries ?

HARD. : Agreed. But depend on't I'm in the right.

MISS HARD. : And depend on't I'm not much in the wrong. [*Exeunt.*

Enter TONY *running in with a casket.*

TONY : Ecod ! I have got them. Here they are. My Cousin Con's necklaces, bobs and all. My mother shan't cheat the poor souls out of their fortin neither. O ! my genus, is that you ?

Enter HASTINGS.

HASTINGS : My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother ? I hope you have amused her with pretending love for your cousin, and that you are willing to be reconciled at last ? Our horses will be refreshed in a short time, and we shall soon be ready to set off.

TONY : And here's something to bear your charges by the way. (*Giving the casket.*) Your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them, and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them !

HASTINGS : But how have you procured them from your mother ?

TONY : Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs. I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the ale house so often as I do ? An honest man may rob himself of his own at any time.

HASTINGS : Thousands do it every day. But to be plain with you ; Miss Neville is endeavouring to procure them from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way at least of obtaining them.

TONY : Well, keep them, till you know how it will be. But I know how it will be well enough, she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head !

HASTINGS : But I dread the effects of her resentment, when she finds she has lost them.

TONY : Never you mind her resentment, leave *me* to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker. Zounds ! here they are ! Morrice, Prance ! [*Exit* HASTINGS.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE *and* MISS NEVILLE.

MRS. HARD. : Indeed, Constance, you amaze me. Such a girl as you want jewels ? It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, twenty years hence, when your beauty begins to want repairs.

MISS NEVILLE : But what will repair beauty at forty, will certainly improve it at twenty, madam.

MRS. HARD. : Yours, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my lady Killdaylight, and Mrs. Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town, and bring nothing but paste and marcasites back ?

MISS NEVILLE : But who knows, madam, but somebody that shall be nameless would like me best with all my little finery about me ?

MRS. HARD. : Consult your glass, my dear, and then see, if with such a pair of eyes, you want any better sparklers. What do you think, Tony, my dear, does your cousin Con. want any jewels, in your eyes, to set off her beauty ?

TONY : That's as thereafter may be.

MISS NEVILLE : My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me.

MRS. HARD. : A parcel of old-fashioned rose and table-cut things. They would make you look like the court of King Solomon at a puppet-show. Besides, I believe I can't readily come at them. They may be missing, for aught I know to the contrary.

TONY (*apart to* MRS. HARD.) : Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she's so longing for them. Tell her they're lost. It's the only way to quiet her. Say they're lost, and call me to bear witness.

MRS. HARD. (*apart to* TONY) : You know, my dear, I'm only keeping them for you. So if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you ? He ! he ! he !

TONY : Never fear me. Ecod ! I'll say I saw them taken out with my own eyes.

MISS NEVILLE : I desire them but for a day, madam. Just to be permitted to show them as relics, and then they may be locked up again.

MRS. HARD. : To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them, you should have them. They're missing, I assure you. Lost, for aught I know ; but we must have patience wherever they are.

MISS NEVILLE : I'll not believe it ; this is but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they're too valuable to be so slightly kept, and as you are to answer for the loss.

MRS. HARD. : Don't be alarmed, Constance. If they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they are missing, and not to be found.

TONY : That I can bear witness to. They are missing, and not to be found, I'll take my oath on't !

MRS. HARD. : You must learn resignation, my dear ; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am !

MISS NEVILLE : Ay, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

MRS. HARD. : Now, I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them ; and, in the meantime, you shall make use of my garnets till your jewels be found.

MISS NEVILLE : I detest garnets !

MRS. HARD. : The most becoming things in the world to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they look upon me. You *shall* have them. [*Exit.*

MISS NEVILLE : I dislike them of all things. You shan't stir.—Was ever anything so provoking to mislay my own jewels, and force me to wear her trumpery.

TONY : Don't be a fool. If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark, he'll tell you more of the matter. Leave me to manage *her*.

MISS NEVILLE : My dear cousin !

TONY : Vanish. She's here, and has missed them already. Zounds ! how she fidgets and spits about like a Catharine wheel.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE.

MRS. HARD. : Confusion ! thieves ! robbers ! We are cheated, plundered, broke open, undone !

TONY : What's the matter, what's the matter, mamma ? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family !

MRS. HARD. : We are robbed. My bureau has been broke open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone !

TONY : Oh ! is that all ? Ha ! ha ! ha ! By the laws, I never saw it better acted in my life. Ecod, I thought you was ruined in earnest, ha, ha, ha !

MRS. HARD. : Why, boy, I *am* ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broken open, and all taken away.

TONY : Stick to that ; ha, ha, ha ! stick to that. I'll bear witness, you know, call me to bear witness.

MRS. HARD. : I tell you, Tony, by all that's precious, the jewels are gone, and I shall be ruined for ever.

TONY : Sure I know they're gone, and I am to say so.

MRS. HARD. : My dearest Tony, but hear me. They're gone, I say.

TONY : By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh, ha ! ha ! I know who took them well enough, ha ! ha ! ha !

MRS. HARD. : Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest. I tell you I'm not in jest, booby !

TONY : That's right, that's right : You must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone.

MRS. HARD. : Was there ever such a cross-grained brute, that won't hear me ? Can you bear witness that you're no better than a fool ? Was ever poor woman so beset with fools on one hand, and thieves on the other ?

TONY : I can bear witness to that.

MRS. HARD. : Bear witness again, you blockhead, you, and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor niece, what will become of *her ?* Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoyed my distress ?

TONY : I can bear witness to that.

MRS. HARD. : Do you insult me, monster ? I'll teach you to vex your mother. I will !

TONY : I can bear witness to that. [*He runs off, she follows him.*

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE *and* MAID.

MISS HARD. : What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn, ha ! ha ! I don't wonder at his impudence.

MAID : But what is more, madam, the young gentleman as you passed by in your present dress, asked me if you were the barmaid ? He mistook you for the barmaid, madam !

MISS HARD. : Did he ? Then as I live I'm resolved to keep up the delusion. Tell me, Pimple, how do you like my present dress ? Don't you think I look something like Cherry in the Beaux' Stratagem ?

MAID : It's the dress, madam, that every lady wears in the country, but when she visits or receives company.

Miss Hard. : And are you sure he does not remember my face or person ?

Maid : Certain of it !

Miss Hard. : I vow, I thought so ; for though we spoke for some time together, yet his fears were such, that he never once looked up during the interview. Indeed, if he had, my bonnet would have kept him from seeing me.

Maid : But what do you hope from keeping him in his mistake ?

Miss Hard. : In the first place, I shall be *seen*, and that is no small advantage to a girl who brings her face to market. Then I shall perhaps make an acquaintance, and that's no small victory gained over one who never addresses any but the wildest of her sex. But my chief aim is to take my gentleman off his guard, and like an invisible champion of romance examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

Maid : But you are sure you can act your part, and disguise your voice, so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person ?

Miss Hard. : Never fear me. I think I have got the true bar cant.—Did your honour call ?——Attend the Lion there.——Pipes and tobacco for the Angel. —The Lamb has been outrageous this half hour !

Maid : It will do, madam. But he's here. [*Exit* Maid.

Enter Marlow.

Marlow : What a bawling in every part of the house ; I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my host and his story. If I fly to the gallery, there we have my hostess with her curtsey down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself, and now for recollection.

[*Walks and muses.*

Miss Hard. : Did you call, sir ? did your honour call ?

Marlow (*musing*) : As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

Miss Hard. : Did your honour call ?

[*She still places herself before him, he turning away.*

Marlow : No, child ! (*Musing.*) Besides from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

Miss Hard. : I'm sure, sir, I heard the bell ring.

Marlow : No ! no ! (*Musing.*) I have pleased my father, however, by coming down, and I'll to-morrow please myself by returning.

[*Taking out his tablets, and perusing.*

Miss Hard. : Perhaps the other gentleman called, sir ?

Marlow : I tell you, no.

Miss Hard. : I should be glad to know, sir. We have such a parcel of servants.

Marlow : No, no, I tell you. (*Looks full in her face.*) Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted——I wanted——I vow, child, you are vastly handsome !

Miss Hard. : O la, sir, you'll make one ashamed.

Marlow : Never saw a more sprightly malicious eye. Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you got any of your—a—what d'ye call it in the house ?

Miss Hard. : No, sir, we have been out of that these ten days.

Marlow : One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of trial, of the nectar of your lips ; perhaps I might be disappointed in that, too !

Miss Hard. : Nectar ! nectar ! that's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We keep no French wines here, sir.

Marlow : Of true English growth, I assure you.

Miss Hard. : Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

MARLOW : Eighteen years ! Why one would think, child, you kept the bar before you were born. How old are you ?

MISS HARD. : O ! sir, I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated.

MARLOW : To guess at this distance, you can't be much above forty. (*Approaching.*) Yet nearer I don't think so much. (*Approaching.*) By coming close to some women they look younger still ; but when we come very close indeed. (*Attempting to kiss her.*)

MISS HARD : Pray, sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age as they do horses, by mark of mouth.

MARLOW : I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can be ever acquainted ?

MISS HARD. : And who wants to be acquainted with you ? I want no such acquaintance, not I. I'm sure you did not treat Miss Hardcastle that was here awhile ago in this obstropalous manner. I'll warrant me, before her you looked dashed, and kept bowing to the ground, and talked, for all the world, as if you was before a justice of peace.

MARLOW (*aside*) : Egad ! she has hit it, sure enough. (*To her.*) In awe of her, child ? Ha ! ha ! ha ! A mere awkward, squinting thing, no, no ! I find you don't know me. I laughed, and rallied her a little ; but I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe, curse me !

MISS HARD. : O ! then, sir, you are a favourite, I find, among the ladies ?

MARLOW : Yes, my dear, a great favourite. And yet, hang me, I don't see what they find in me to follow. At the Ladies' Club in town I'm called their agreeable Rattle. Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Solomons. Mr. Solomons, my dear, at your service. (*Offering to salute her.*)

MISS HARD. Hold, sir ; you were introducing me to your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favourite there you say ?

MARLOW : Yes, my dear. There's Mrs. Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Sligo, Mrs. Longhorns, old Miss Biddy Buckskin, and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

MISS HARD. : Then it's a very merry place, I suppose.

MARLOW : Yes, as merry as cards, suppers, wine, and old women can make us.

MISS HARD. : And their agreeable Rattle, ha ! ha ! ha !

MARLOW (*aside*) : Egad ! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks. You laugh, child !

MISS HARD. : I can't but laugh to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

MARLOW (*aside*) : All's well, she don't laugh at me. (*To her.*) Do *you* ever work, child ?

MISS HARD. : Ay, sure. There's not a screen or a quilt in the whole house but what can bear witness to that.

MARLOW : Odso ! Then you must show me your embroidery. I embroider and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work you must apply to me. [*Seizing her hand.*

MISS HARD. : Ay, but the colours don't look well by candle light. You shall see all in the morning. [*Struggling.*

MARLOW : And why not now, my angel ? Such beauty fires beyond the power of resistance.——Pshaw ! the father here ! My old luck : I never nicked seven that I did not throw ames-ace three times following. [*Exit* MARLOW.

Enter HARDCASTLE, *who stands in surprise.*

HARD. : So, madam ! So I find *this* is your *modest* lover. This is your humble

admirer that kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and only adored at humble distance. Kate, Kate, art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so ?

MISS HARD. : Never trust me, dear papa, but he's still the modest man I first took him for, you'll be convinced of it as well as I.

HARD. : By the hand of my body, I believe his impudence is infectious ! Didn't I see him seize your hand ? Didn't I see him haul you about like a milkmaid ? and now you talk of his respect and his modesty, forsooth !

MISS HARD. : But if I shortly convince you of his modesty, that he has only the faults that will pass off with time, and the virtues that will improve with age, I hope, you'll forgive him.

HARD. : The girl would actually make one run mad ! I tell you I'll not be convinced. I am convinced. He has scarcely been three hours in the house, and he has already encroached on all my prerogatives. You may like his impudence, and call it modesty. But my son-in-law, madam, must have very different qualifications.

MISS HARD. : Sir, I ask but this night to convince you.

HARD. : You shall not have half the time, for I have thoughts of turning him out this very hour.

MISS HARD. : Give me that hour then, and I hope to satisfy you.

HARD. : Well, an hour let it be then. But I'll have no trifling with your father. All fair and open, do you mind me ?

MISS HARD. : I hope, sir, you have ever found that I considered your commands as my pride ; for your kindness is such, that my duty as yet has been inclination. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

HASTINGS : You surprise me ! Sir Charles Marlow expected here this night ? Where have you had your information ?

MISS NEVILLE : You may depend upon it. I just saw his letter to Mr. Hardcastle, in which he tells him he intends setting out a few hours after his son.

HASTINGS : Then, my Constance, all must be completed before he arrives. He knows me ; and should he find me here, would discover my name, and perhaps my designs, to the rest of the family.

MISS NEVELL : The jewels, I hope, are safe.

HASTINGS : Yes, yes. I have sent them to Marlow, who keeps the keys of our baggage. In the meantime, I'll go to prepare matters for our elopement. I have had the Squire's promise of a fresh pair of horses ; and, if I should not see him again, will write him further directions. [*Exit.*

MISS NEVILLE : Well ! success attend you. In the meantime, I'll go amuse my aunt with the old pretence of a violent passion for my cousin. [*Exit.*

Enter MARLOW, *followed by a* SERVANT.

MARLOW : I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach at an Inn-door. Have you deposited the casket with the landlady, as I ordered you ? Have you put it into her own hands ?

SERVANT : Yes, your honour.

MARLOW : She said she'd keep it safe, did she ?

SERVANT : Yes, she said she'd keep it safe enough ; she asked me how I came by it ? and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself. [*Exit* SERVANT.

MARLOW : Ha ! ha ! ha ! They're safe, however. What an unaccountable set of

beings have we got amongst ! This little barmaid though runs in my hea most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family She's mine, she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken !

Enter HASTINGS.

HASTINGS : Bless me ! I quite forgot to tell her that I intended to prepare at th bottom of the garden. Marlow here, and in spirits, too !

MARLOW : Give me joy, George ! Crown me, shadow me with laurels ! Wel George, after all, we modest fellows don't want for success among th women.

HASTINGS : Some women, you mean. But what success has your honour modesty been crowned with now, that it grows so insolent upon us ?

MARLOW : Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lovely little thing that runs abou the house with a bunch of keys to its girdle ?

HASTINGS : Well ! and what then ?

MARLOW : She's mine, you rogue, you. Such fire, such motion, such eyes, suc lips—but egad ! she would not let me kiss them though.

HASTINGS : But are you sure, so very sure of her ?

MARLOW : Why, man, she talked of showing me her work above-stairs, and am to improve the pattern.

HASTINGS : But how can *you*, Charles, go about to rob a woman of her honour

MARLOW : Pshaw ! pshaw ! we all know the honour of the barmaid of an inn I don't intend to *rob* her, take my word for it, there's nothing in this house, shan't honestly *pay* for !

HASTINGS : I believe the girl has virtue.

MARLOW : And if she has, I should be the last man in the world that woul attempt to corrupt it.

HASTINGS : You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up It's in safety ?

MARLOW : Yes, yes. It's safe enough. I have taken care of it. But how could yo think the seat of a post-coach at an Inn-door a place of safety ? Ah ! numb skull ! I have taken better precautions for you than you did for yourself.—— I have——

HASTINGS : What !

MARLOW : I have sent it to the landlady to keep for you.

HASTINGS : To the landlady !

MARLOW : The landlady.

HASTINGS : You did !

MARLOW : I did. She's to be answerable for its forthcoming, you know.

HASTINGS : Yes, she'll bring it forth with a witness.

MARLOW : Wasn't I right ? I believe you'll allow that I acted prudently upo this occasion ?

HASTINGS (*aside*) : He must not see my uneasiness.

MARLOW : You seem a little disconcerted, though, methinks. Sure nothing ha happened ?

HASTINGS : No, nothing. Never was I in better spirits in all my life. And so yo left it with the landlady, who, no doubt, very readily undertook the charge

MARLOW : Rather too readily. For she not only kept the casket, but through he great precaution, was going to keep the messenger too. Ha ! ha ! ha !

HASTINGS : He ! he ! he ! They're safe, however.

MARLOW : As a guinea in a miser's purse.

HASTINGS (*aside*) : So now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must se off without it. (*To him.*) Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations or

the pretty barmaids, and, he ! he ! he ! may you be as successful for yourself as you have been for me. [*Exit.*

MARLOW : Thank ye, George ! I ask no more. Ha ! ha ! ha !

Enter HARDCASTLE.

HARD. : I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsy-turvy. His servants have got drunk already. I'll bear it no longer, and yet, from my respect for his father, I'll be calm. (*To him.*) Mr. Marlow, your servant. I'm your very humble servant. [*Bowing low.*

MARLOW : Sir, your humble servant. (*Aside.*) What's to be the wonder now ?

HARD. : I believe, sir, you must be sensible, sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, sir. I hope you think so ?

MARLOW : I do, from my soul, sir. I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome wherever he goes.

HARD. : I believe you do, from my soul, sir. But though I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants is insufferable. Their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

MARLOW : I protest, my very good sir, that's no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought *they* are to blame. I ordered them not to spare the cellar, I did, I assure you. (*To the side scene.*) Here, let one of my servants come up. (*To him.*) My positive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

HARD. : Then they had your orders for what they do ! I'm satisfied !

MARLOW : They had, I assure you. You shall hear from one of themselves.

Enter SERVANT, *drunk.*

MARLOW : You, Jeremy ! Come forward, sirrah ! What were my orders ? Were you not told to drink freely, and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the house ?

HARD. (*aside*) : I begin to lose my patience.

JEREMY : Please your honour, liberty and Fleet Street for ever ! Though I'm but a servant, I'm as good as another man. I'll drink for no man before supper, sir, dammy ! Good liquor will sit upon a good supper, but a good supper will not sit upon——hiccup——upon my conscience, sir.

MARLOW : You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he can possibly be. I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor devil soused in a beer-barrel.

HARD. : Zounds ! He'll drive me distracted if I contain myself any longer. Mr. Marlow. Sir ; I have submitted to your insolence for more than four hours, and I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolved to be master here, sir, and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

MARLOW : Leave your house !—Sure, you jest, my good friend ! What, when I'm doing what I can to please you !

HARD. : I tell you, sir, you don't please me ; so I desire you'll leave my house.

MARLOW : Sure, you cannot be serious ! At this time of night, and such a night ! You only mean to banter me !

HARD. : I tell you, sir, I'm serious ; and, now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, sir ; this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly.

MARLOW : Ha ! ha ! ha ! A puddle in a storm. I shan't stir a step, I assure you. (*In a serious tone.*) This your house, fellow ! It's my house. This is my house. Mine, while I choose to stay. What right have you to bid me leave this house, sir ? I never met with such impudence, curse me, never in my whole life before !

HARD. : Nor I, confound me if ever I did ! To come to my house, to call fo what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to orde his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me *This house is mine, sir.* By al that's impudent, it makes me laugh. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Pray, sir, (*bantering*) a you take the house, what think you of taking the rest of the furniture There's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there's a fire-screen, and here's pair of brazen-nosed bellows, perhaps you may take fancy to them ?

MARLOW : Bring me your bill, sir, bring me your bill, and let's make no mor words about it.

HARD. : There are a set of prints, too. What think you of the Rake's Progress fo your own apartment ?

MARLOW : Bring me your bill, I say ; and I'll leave you and your infernal hous directly.

HARD. : Then there's a mahogany table, that you may see your own face in.

MARLOW : My bill, I say.

HARD. : I had forgot the great chair, for your own particular slumbers, after hearty meal.

MARLOW : Zounds ! bring me my bill, I say, and let's hear no more on't.

HARD. : Young man, young man, from your father's letter to me, I was taugh to expect a well-bred modest man, as a visitor here, but now I find him n better than a coxcomb and a bully ; but he will be down here presently, an shall hear more of it. [*Exit*

MARLOW : How's this ! Sure, I have not mistaken the house ? Everything look like an inn. The servants cry " coming." The attendance is awkward ; th barmaid, too, to attend us. But she's here, and will further inform me Whither so fast, child ? A word with you.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

MISS HARD. : Let it be short, then. I'm in a hurry.—(*Aside.*) I believe he begin to find out his mistake, but it's too soon quite to undeceive him.

MARLOW : Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what ma your business in this house be ?

MISS HARD. : A relation of the family, sir.

MARLOW : What ? A poor relation ?

MISS HARD. : Yes, sir. A poor relation appointed to keep the keys, and to se that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

MARLOW : That is, you act as the barmaid of this inn.

MISS HARD. : Inn ! O law !—What brought that in your head ? One of the bes families in the county keep an inn ! Ha, ha, ha, old Mr. Hardcastle's hous an inn !

MARLOW : Mr. Hardcastle's house ! Is this house Mr. Hardcastle's house child ?

MISS HARD. : Ay, sure. Whose else should it be.

MARLOW : So then all's out, and I have been damnably imposed on. O confound my stupid head, I shall be laughed at over the whole town. I shal be stuck up in caricature in all the print-shops. The Dullissimo Macaroni To mistake this house of all others for an inn, and my father's old friend fo an innkeeper ! What a swaggering puppy must he take me for. What a silly puppy do I find myself. There again, may I be hanged, my dear, but I mis took you for the barmaid !

MISS HARD. : Dear me ! dear me ! I'm sure there's nothing in my *behaviour* t put me upon a level with one of that stamp.

MARLOW : Nothing, my dear, nothing. But I was in for a list of blunders, an could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw everything the

wrong way. I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurement. But it's over—this house I no more show *my* face in !

MISS HARD. : I hope, sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I'm sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite, and said so many civil things to me. I'm sure I should be sorry (*pretending to cry*) if he left the family upon my account. I'm sure I should be sorry people said anything amiss, since I have no fortune but my character.

MARLOW (*aside*) : By heaven, she weeps. This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest woman, and it touches me. (*To her.*) Excuse me, my lovely girl, you are the only part of the family I leave with reluctance. But to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune, and education, make an honourable connexion impossible ; and I can never harbour a thought of seducing simplicity that trusted in my honour, or bringing ruin upon one whose only fault was being too lovely.

MISS HARD. (*aside*) : Generous man ! I now begin to admire him. (*To him.*) But I'm sure my family is as good as Miss Hardcastle's, and though I'm poor, that's no great misfortune to a contented mind, and, until this moment, I never thought that it was bad to want fortune.

MARLOW : And why now, my pretty simplicity ?

MISS HARD. : Because it puts me at a distance from one, that if I had a thousand pound I would give it all to.

MARLOW (*aside*) : This simplicity bewitches me, so that if I stay I'm undone. I must make one bold effort, and leave her. (*To her.*) Your partiality in my favour, my dear, touches me most sensibly, and were I to live for myself alone, I could easily fix my choice. But I owe too much to the opinion of the world, too much to the authority of a father, so that—I can scarcely speak it —it affects me ! Farewell ! [*Exit.*

MISS HARD. : I never knew half his merit till now. He shall not go, if I have power or art to detain him. I'll still preserve the character in which I stooped to conquer, but will undeceive my papa, who perhaps, may laugh him out of his resolution. [*Exit.*

Enter TONY, MISS NEVILLE.

TONY : Ay, you may steal for yourselves the next time. I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again, that's a sure thing ; but she believes it was all a mistake of the servants.

MISS NEVILLE : But, my dear cousin, sure, you won't forsake us in this distress. If she in the least suspects that I am going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

TONY : To be sure, aunts of all kinds are damned bad things. But what can I do ? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like Whistlejacket, and I'm sure you can't say but I have courted you nicely before her face. Here she comes, we must court a bit or two more, for fear she should suspect us.

[*They retire, and seem to fondle.*

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE.

MRS. HARD. : Well, I was greatly fluttered, to be sure. But my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I shan't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. But what do I see ! Fondling together, as I'm alive ! I never saw Tony so sprightly before. Ah ! have I caught you, my pretty doves ! What, billing, exchanging stolen glances, and broken murmurs ! Ah !

TONY : As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little now and then, to be sure. But there's no love lost between us.

MRS. HARD. : A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter.

MISS NEVILLE : Cousin Tony promises to give us more of his company at home. Indeed, he shan't leave us any more. It won't leave us, cousin Tony, will it ?

TONY : O ! It's a pretty creature. No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pound, than leave you when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming.

MISS NEVILLE : Agreeable cousin ! Who can help admiring that natural humour, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless (*patting her cheek*) ah ! it's a bold face.

MRS. HARD. : Pretty innocence !

TONY : I'm sure I always loved cousin Con's hazel eyes, and her pretty long fingers, that she twists this way and that, over the haspicholls, like a parcel of bobbins.

MRS. HARD. : Ah, he would charm the bird from the tree. I was never so happy before. My boy takes after his father, poor Mr. Lumpkin, exactly. The jewels, my dear Con, shall be your's incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear ? You shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Dr. Drowsy's sermons, to a fitter opportunity.

Enter DIGGORY.

DIGGORY : Where's the 'Squire ? I have got a letter for your worship.

TONY : Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

DIGGORY : I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

TONY : Who does it come from ?

DIGGORY : Your worship mun ask that of the letter itself.

TONY : I could wish to know, though. (*Turning the letter, and gazing on it.*)

MISS NEVILLE (*aside*) : Undone, undone ! A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees it we are ruined for ever. I'll keep her employed a little if I can. (*To* MRS. HARDCASTLE.) But I have not told you, madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr. Marlow. We so laughed—you must know, madam—this way a little, for he must not hear us. (*They confer.*)

TONY (*still gazing*) : A damned cramp piece of penmanship, as ever I saw in my life. I can read your print-hand very well. But here there are such handles, and shanks, and dashes, that one can scarce tell the head from the tail. *To* ANTHONY LUMPKIN, ESQUIRE. It's very odd, I can read the outside of my letters, where my own name is, well enough. But when I come to open it, it's all—buzz. That's hard, very hard ; for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

MRS. HARD. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher !

MISS NEVILLE : Yes, madam ; but you must hear the rest, madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

MRS. HARD. : He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

TONY (*still gazing*) : A damned up and down hand, as if it was disguised in liquor. (*Reading.*) *Dear Sir*. Ay, that's that. Then there's an *M*. and *a T*, and an *S*, but whether the next be an *izzard* or an *R*, confound me, I cannot tell !

MRS. HARD : What's that, my dear ? Can I give you any assistance ?

MISS NEVILLE : Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. (*Twitching the letter from her.*) Do you know who it is from ?

TONY : Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger the feeder.

MISS NEVILLE : Ay, so it is. (*Pretending to read.*) Dear 'Squire, Hoping that you're in health, as I am at this present. The gentlemen of the Shakebag club has cut the gentlemen of Goose-green quite out of feather. The odds—

um—odd battle—um—long fighting—um, here, here, it's all about cocks, and fighting ; it's of no consequence, here, put it up, put it up.

[*Thrusting the crumpled letter upon him.*

TONY : But I tell you, miss, it's of all the consequence in the world ! I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea ! Here, mother, do you make it out ? Of no consequence ! [*Giving* MRS. HARDCASTLE *the letter.*

MRS. HARD. : How's this ! (*Reads.*) Dear 'Squire, I'm now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post-chaise and pair at the bottom of the garden, but I find my horses yet unable to perform the journey. I expect you'll assist us with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Dispatch is necessary, as the *hag* (ay, the hag) your mother, will otherwise suspect us. Yours, Hastings. Grant me patience. I shall run distracted ! My rage chokes me.

MISS NEVILLE : I hope, madam, you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence, or sinister design that belongs to another.

MRS. HARD. (*curtseying very low*) : Fine spoken, madam, you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of courtesy and circumspection, madam. (*Changing her tone.*) And you, you great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut. Were you too joined against me ? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment. As for you, madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready, it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare, this very moment, to run off with *me*. Your old aunt Pedigree will keep you secure, I'll warrant me. You too, sir, may mount your horse, and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory, I'll show you that I wish you better than you do yourselves. [*Exit.*

MISS NEVILLE : So now I'm completely ruined.

TONY : Ay, that's a sure thing.

MISS NEVILLE : What better could be expected from being connected with such a stupid fool, and after all the nods and signs I made him.

TONY : By the laws, miss, it was your own cleverness, and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so nice and so busy with your Shakebags and Goose-greens, that I thought you could never be making believe.

Enter HASTINGS.

HASTINGS : So, sir, I find by my servant, that you have shown my letter, and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman ?

TONY : Here's another. Ask miss there who betrayed you. Ecod, it was her doing, not mine.

Enter MARLOW.

MARLOW : So I have been finely used here among you. Rendered contemptible, driven into ill manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

TONY : Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

MISS NEVILLE : And there, sir, is the gentleman to whom we all owe every obligation.

MARLOW : What can I say to him, a mere boy, an idiot, whose ignorance and age are a protection.

HASTINGS : A poor contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction.

MISS NEVILLE : Yet with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with all our embarrassments.

HASTINGS : An insensible cub.

MARLOW : Replete with tricks and mischief.

TONY : Baw ! damme, but I'll fight you both one after the other,——with baskets.

MARLOW : As for him, he's below resentment. But your conduct, Mr. Hastings, requires an explanation. You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

HASTINGS : Tortured as I am with my own disappointment, is this a time for explanations ? It is not friendly, Mr. Marlow.

MARLOW : But, sir—

MISS NEVILLE : Mr. Marlow, we never kept on your mistake, till it was too late to undeceive you. Be pacified.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT : My mistress desires you'll get ready immediately, madam. The horses are putting to. Your hat and things are in the next room. We are to go thirty miles before morning. [*Exit* SERVANT.

MISS NEVILLE : Well, well ; I'll come presently.

MARLOW (*to* HASTINGS) : Was it well done, sir, to assist in rendering me ridiculous ? To hang me out for the scorn of all my acquaintance ? Depend upon it, sir, I shall expect an explanation.

HASTINGS : Was it well done, sir, if you're upon that subject, to deliver what I entrusted to yourself, to the care of another, sir ?

MISS NEVILLE : Mr. Hastings. Mr. Marlow. Why will you increase my distress by this groundless dispute ? I implore, I entreat you——

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT : Your cloak, madam. My mistress is impatient.

MISS NEVILLE : I come. Pray be pacified. If I leave you thus, I shall die with apprehension !

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT : Your fan, muff, and gloves, madam. The horses are waiting.

MISS NEVILLE : O, Mr. Marlow ! if you knew what a scene of constraint and ill-nature lies before me, I'm sure it would convert your resentment into pity.

MARLOW : I'm so distracted with a variety of passions, that I don't know what I do. Forgive me, madam. George, forgive me. You know my hasty temper, and should not exasperate it.

HASTINGS : The torture of my situation is my only excuse.

MISS NEVILLE : Well, my dear Hastings, if you have that esteem for me that I think, that I am sure you have, your constancy for three years will but increase the happiness of our future connection. If—

MRS. HARD. (*within*) : Miss Neville. Constance, why, Constance, I say.

MISS NEVILLE : I'm coming. Well, constancy. Remember, constancy is the word. [*Exit.*

HASTINGS : My heart ! How can I support this ! To be so near happiness, and such happiness !

MARLOW (*to* TONY) : You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. What might be amusement to you, is here disappointment, and even distress.

TONY (*from a reverie*) : Ecod, I have hit it. It's here. Your hands. Yours and yours, my poor Sulky. My boots there, ho ! Meet me two hours hence at the bottom of the garden ; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin a more good-natur'd fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse, and Bet Bouncer into the bargain ! Come along. My boots, ho ! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE—*Continues.*

Enter HASTINGS *and* SERVANT.

HASTINGS : You saw the old lady and Miss Neville drive off, you say?

SERVANT : Yes, your honour. They went off in a post-coach, and the young 'Squire went on horseback. They're thirty miles off by this time.

HASTINGS : Then all my hopes are over.

SERVANT : Yes, sir. Old Sir Charles is arrived. He and the old gentleman of the house have been laughing at Mr. Marlow's mistake this half hour. They are coming this way.

HASTINGS : Then I must not be seen. So now to my fruitless appointment at the bottom of the garden. This is about the time. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* HARDCASTLE.

HARD. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! The peremptory tone in which he sent forth his sublime commands.

SIR CHARLES : And the reserve with which I suppose he treated all your advances.

HARD. : And yet he might have seen something in me above a common innkeeper, too.

SIR CHARLES : Yes, Dick, but he mistook you for an uncommon innkeeper, ha ! ha ! ha !

HARD. : Well, I'm in too good spirits to think of anything but joy. Yes, my dear friend, this union of our families will make our personal friendships hereditary : and though my daughter's fortune is but small——

SIR CHARLES : Why, Dick, will you talk of fortune to *me* ? My son is possessed of more than a competence already, and can want nothing but a good and virtuous girl to share his happiness and increase it. If they like each other, as you say they do——

HARD. : *If*, man ! I tell you they *do* like each other. My daughter as good as told me so.

SIR CHARLES : But girls are apt to flatter themselves, you know.

HARD. : I saw him grasp her hand in the warmest manner myself ; and here he comes to put you out of your *ifs*, I warrant him.

Enter MARLOW.

MARLOW : I come, sir, once more, to ask pardon for my strange conduct. I can scarce reflect on my insolence without confusion.

HARD. : Tut, boy, a trifle. You take it too gravely. An hour or two's laughing with my daughter will set all to rights again. She'll never like you the worse for it.

MARLOW : Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

HARD. : Approbation is but a cold word. Mr. Marlow ; if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me.

MARLOW : Really, sir, I have not that happiness.

HARD. : Come, boy, I'm an old fellow, and know what's what, as well as you that are younger. I know what has past between you ; but mum.

MARLOW : Sure, sir, nothing has past between us but the most profound respect on my side, and the most distant reserve on her's. You don't think, sir, that my impudence has been past upon all the rest of the family.

HARD. : Impudence ! No, I don't say that—Not quite impudence—Though

girls like to be played with, and rumpled a little too, sometimes. But she has told no tales, I assure you.

MARLOW : I never gave her the slightest cause.

HARD. : Well, well, I like modesty in its place well enough. But this is over-acting, young gentleman. You *may* be open. Your father and I will like you the better for it.

MARLOW : May I die, sir, if I ever——

HARD. : I tell you, she don't dislike you ; and as I'm sure you like her——

MARLOW : Dear sir—I protest, sir——

HARD. : I see no reason why you should not be joined as fast as the parson can tie you.

MARLOW : But hear me, sir——

HARD. : Your father approves the match, I admire it, every moment's delay will be doing mischief, so——

MARLOW : But why won't you hear me ? By all that's just and true, I never gave Miss Hardcastle the slightest mark of my attachment, or even the most distant hint to suspect me of affection. We had but one interview, and that was formal, modest and uninteresting.

HARD. (*aside*) : This fellow's formal modest impudence is beyond bearing.

SIR CHARLES : And you never grasped her hand, or made any protestations !

MARLOW : As heaven is my witness, I came down in obedience to your commands. I saw the lady without emotion, and parted without reluctance. I hope you'll exact no further proofs of my duty, nor prevent me from leaving a house in which I suffer so many mortifications. [*Exit.*

SIR CHARLES : I'm astonished at the air of sincerity with which he parted.

HARD. : And I'm astonished at the deliberate intrepidity of his assurance.

SIR CHARLES : I dare pledge my life and honour upon his truth.

HARD. : Here comes my daughter, and I would stake my happiness upon her veracity.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

HARD. : Kate, come hither, child. Answer us sincerely, and without reserve ; has Mr. Marlow made you any professions of love and affection ?

MISS HARD. : The question is very abrupt, sir ! But since you require unreserved sincerity, I think he has.

HARD. (*to* SIR CHARLES) : You see.

SIR CHARLES : And pray, madam, have you and my son had more than one interview ?

MISS HARD : Yes, sir, several.

HARD (*to* SIR CHARLES) : You see.

SIR CHARLES : But did he profess any attachment ?

MISS HARD. : A lasting one.

SIR CHARLES : Did he talk of love ?

MISS HARD. : Much, sir.

SIR CHARLES : Amazing ! And all this formally ?

MISS HARD : Formally.

HARD. : Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied.

SIR CHARLES : And how did he behave, madam ?

MISS HARD. : As most professed admirers do. Said some civil things of my face, talked much of his want of merit, and the greatness of mine ; mentioned his heart, gave a short tragedy speech, and ended with pretended rapture.

SIR CHARLES : Now I'm perfectly convinced, indeed, I know his conversation among women to be modest and submissive. This forward, canting, ranting

manner by no means describes him, and I am confident he never sat for the picture.

MISS HARD. : Then what, sir, if I should convince you to your face of my sincerity? If you and my papa, in about half-an-hour, will place yourselves behind that screen, you shall hear him declare his passion to me in person.

SIR CHARLES : Agreed. And if I find him what you describe, all my happiness in him must have an end. [*Exit.*

MISS HARD. : And if you don't find him what I describe—I fear my happiness must never have a beginning. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE—*Changes to the back of the Garden.*

Enter HASTINGS.

HASTINGS : What an idiot am I, to wait here for a fellow, who probably takes a delight in mortifying me. He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. What do I see? It is he, and perhaps with news of my Constance.

Enter TONY, *booted and spattered.*

HASTINGS : My honest 'Squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

TONY : Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world, if you knew but all. This riding by night, by-the-bye, is cursedly tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.

HASTINGS : But how? Where did you leave your fellow-travellers? Are they in safety? Are they housed?

TONY : Five and twenty miles in two hours and a half is no such bad driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it: Rabbit me, but I'd rather ride forty miles after a fox, than ten with such *varmint*.

HASTINGS : Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

TONY : Left them? Why, where should I leave them, but where I found them?

HASTINGS : This is a riddle.

TONY : Riddle me this, then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house?

HASTINGS : I'm still astray.

TONY : Why, that's it, mon. I have led them astray. By jingo, there's not a pond or slough within five miles of the place but they can tell the taste of.

HASTINGS : Ha, ha, ha, I understand; you took them in a round, while they supposed themselves going forward. And so you have at last brought them home again.

TONY : You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed-lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-down Hill—I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavytree Heath, and from that, with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horsepond at the bottom of the garden.

HASTINGS : But no accident, I hope.

TONY : No, no. Only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey, and the cattle can scarce crawl. So, if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow you.

HASTINGS : My dear friend, how can I be grateful?

TONY : Ay, now it's dear friend, noble 'Squire. Just now, it was all idiot, cub, and run me through the guts. Damn *your* way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I should be dead, and you might go kiss the hangman.

HASTINGS : The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville ; if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one.
[*Exit* HASTINGS.

TONY : Never fear me. Here she comes, Vanish. She's got from the pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE.

MRS. HARD. : Oh, Tony, I'm killed. Shook. Battered to death. I shall never survive it. That last jolt that laid us against the quickset hedge has done my business.

TONY : Alack, mamma, it was all your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

MRS. HARD. : I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drenched in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way ! Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony ?

TONY : By my guess we should be upon Crackskull Common, about forty mile from home.

MRS. HARD. : O lud ! O lud ! the most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

TONY : Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid. Two of the five that kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid. Is that a man that's galloping behind us ? No ; its only a tree. Don't be afraid.

MRS. HARD. : The fright will certainly kill me.

TONY : Do you see anything like a black hat moving behind the thicket ?

MRS. HARD. : O death !

TONY : No, it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid.

MRS. HARD. : As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah ! I'm sure on't. If he perceives us, we are undone.

TONY (*aside*) : Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky, come to take one of his night walks. (*To her.*) Ah, it's a highwayman, with pistols as long as my arm. A damned ill-looking fellow.

MRS. HARD. : Good heaven defend us ! He approaches.

TONY : Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger I'll cough and cry hem. When I cough be sure to keep close. [MRS. HARDCASTLE *hides behind a tree in the back scene.*

Enter HARDCASTLE.

HARD. : I'm mistaken, or I heard voices of people in want of help. Oh, Tony, is that you ? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety ?

TONY : Very safe, sir, at my aunt Pedigree's. Hem.

MRS. HARD (*from behind*) : Ah ! I find there's danger.

HARD. : Forty miles in three hours ; sure, that's too much, my youngster.

TONY : Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys, as they say. Hem.

MRS. HARD (*from behind*) : Sure he'll do the dear boy no harm.

HARD. : But I heard a voice here ; I should be glad to know from whence it came.

TONY : It was I, sir, talking to myself, sir. I was saying that forty miles in four hours was very good going. Hem. As to be sure it was. Hem. I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in if you please. Hem.

HARD. : But if you talked to yourself, you did not answer yourself. I am certain I heard two voices, and am resolved (*raising his voice*) to find the other out.

MRS. HARD (*from behind*) : Oh ! he's coming to find me out. Oh !

TONY : What need you go, sir, if I tell you ? Hem. I'll lay down my life for the truth—hem—I'll tell you all, sir. [*Detaining him.*

HARD. : I tell you I will not be detained. I insist on seeing. It's in vain to expect I'll believe you.

MRS. HARD. (*running forward from behind*) : O lud, he'll murder my poor boy, my darling. Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life, but spare that young gentleman, spare my child, if you have any mercy.

HARD. : My wife ! as I'm a Christian. From whence can she come, or what does she mean ?

MRS. HARD. (*kneeling*) : Take compassion on us, good Mr. Highwayman. Take our money, our watches, all we have, but spare our lives. We will never bring you to justice, indeed we won't, good Mr. Highwayman.

HARD. : I believe the woman's out of her senses. What, Dorothy, don't you know *me ?*

MRS. HARD. : Mr. Hardcastle, as I'm alive ! My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home. What has brought you to follow us ?

HARD. : Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits ! So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door ! (*To him.*) This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue, you ! (*To her.*) Don't you know the gate, and the mulberry-tree ; and don't you remember the horsepond, my dear ?

MRS. HARD. : Yes, I shall remember the horsepond as long as I live ; I have caught my death in it. (*To* TONY.) And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this ? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

TONY : Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

MRS. HARD. : I'll spoil you, I will. [*Follows him off the stage. Exit.*

HARD. : There's morality, however in his reply. [*Exit.*

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

HASTING : My dear Constance, why will you deliberate thus ? If we delay a moment, all is lost for ever. Pluck up a little resolution, and we shall soon be out of the reach of her malignity.

MISS NEVILLE : I find it impossible. My spirits are so sunk with the agitations I have suffered, that I am unable to face any new danger. Two or three years' patience will at last crown us with happiness.

HASTINGS : Such a tedious delay is worse than inconstancy. Let us fly, my charmer. Let us date our happiness from this very moment. Perish fortune. Love and content will increase what we possess beyond a monarch's revenue. Let me prevail.

MISS NEVILLE : No, Mr. Hastings, no. Prudence once more comes to my relief, and I will obey its dictates. In the moment of passion, fortune may be despised, but it ever produces a lasting repentance. I'm resolved to apply to Mr. Hardcastle's compassion and justice for redress.

HASTINGS : But though he had the will, he has not the power to relieve you.

MISS NEVILLE : But he has influence, and upon that I am resolved to rely.

HASTINGS : I have no hopes. But since you persist, I must reluctantly obey you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE—*Changes.*

Enter SIR CHARLES *and* MISS HARDCASTLE.

SIR CHARLES : What a situation am I in ! If what you say appears, I shall then

find a guilty son. If what he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.

Miss Hard. : I am proud of your approbation ; and, to show I merit it, if you place yourselves as I directed, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes.

Sir Charles : I'll to your father, and keep him to the appointment.

[*Exit* Sir Charles.

Enter Marlow.

Marlow : Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave, nor did I, till this moment, know the pain I feel in the separation.

Miss Hard. (*in her own natural manner*) : I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness, by showing the little value of what you think proper to regret.

Marlow (*aside*) : This girl every moment improves upon me. (*To her.*) It must not be, madam. I have already trifled too long with my heart. My very pride begins to submit to my passion. The disparity of education and fortune, the anger of a parent, and the contempt of my equals, begin to lose their weight ; and nothing can restore me to myself but this painful effort of resolution.

Miss Hard. : Then go, sir. I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as hers you came down to visit, and my education, I hope, not inferior, what are these advantages without equal affluence ? I must remain contented with the slight approbation of imputed merit ; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune.

Enter Hardcastle *and* Sir Charles *from behind.*

Sir Charles : Here, behind this screen.

Hard. : Ay, ay, make no noise. I'll engage my Kate covers him with confusion at last.

Marlow : By heavens, madam, fortune was ever my smallest consideration. Your beauty at first caught my eye ; for who could see that without emotion ? But every moment that I converse with you, steals in some new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What at first seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence, and conscious virtue.

Sir Charles : What can it mean ? He amazes me !

Hard. : I told you how it would be. Hush !

Marlow : I am now determined to stay, madam, and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to doubt his approbation.

Miss Hard. : No, Mr. Marlow, I will not, cannot detain you. Do you think I could suffer a connection, in which there is the smallest room for repentance ? Do you think I would take the mean advantage of a transient passion, to load you with confusion ? Do you think I could ever relish that happiness, which was acquired by lessening yours ?

Marlow : By all that's good, I can have no happiness but what's in your power to grant me. Nor shall I ever feel repentance, but in not having seen your merits before. I will stay, even contrary to your wishes ; and though you should persist to shun me, I will make my respectful assiduities atone for the levity of my past conduct.

Miss Hard. : Sir, I must entreat you'll desist. As our acquaintance began, so let

it end, in indifference. I might have given an hour or two to levity ; but, seriously, Mr. Marlow, do you think I could ever submit to a connection, where *I* must appear mercenary, and *you* imprudent? Do you think I could ever catch at the confident addresses of a secure admirer ?

MARLOW (*kneeling*) : Does this look like security ? Does this look like confidence ? No, madam, every moment that shows me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue——

SIR CHARLES : I can hold it no longer. Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me ! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation !

HARD. : Your cold contempt ! your formal interview ! What have you to say now ?

MARLOW : That I'm all amazement ! What can it mean ?

HARD. : It means that you can say and unsay things at pleasure. That you can address a lady in private, and deny it in public ; that you have one story for us, and another for my daughter !

MARLOW : Daughter !—this lady your daughter !

HARD. : Yes, sir, my only daughter. My Kate, whose else should she be ?

MARLOW : Oh, the devil.

MISS HARD. : Yes, sir, that very identical tall squinting lady you were pleased to take me for (*curtseying.*) She that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity, and the bold, forward, agreeable Rattle of the ladies' club : ha, ha, ha !

MARLOW : Zounds, there's no bearing this ; it's worse than death !

MISS HARD. : In which of your characters, sir, will you give us leave to address you ? As the faltering gentleman, with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard, and hates hypocrisy : or the loud confident creature, that keeps it up with Mrs. Mantrap, and old Miss Biddy Buckskin, till three in the morning ; ha, ha, ha !

MARLOW : Oh, curse on my noisy head. I never attempted to be impudent yet, that I was not taken down. I must be gone.

HARD. : By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I am rejoiced to find it. You shall not, sir, I tell you. I know she'll forgive you. Won't you forgive him, Kate ? We'll all forgive you. Take courage, man. [*They retire, she tormenting him to the back scene.*

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE, TONY.

MRS. HARD. : So, so, they're gone off. Let them go, I care not.

HARD. : Who gone ?

MRS. HARD. : My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr. Hastings, from town. He who came down with our modest visitor, here.

SIR CHARLES : Who, my honest George Hastings ? As worthy a fellow as lives, and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice.

HARD. : Then, by the hand of my body, I'm proud of the connection.

MRS. HARD. : Well, if he has taken away the lady, he has not taken her fortune, that remains in this family to console us for her loss.

HARD. : Sure, Dorothy, you would not be so mercenary ?

MRS. HARD. : Ay, that's my affair, not yours. But you know, if your son when of age, refuses to marry his cousin, her whole fortune is then at her own disposal.

HARD. : Ay, but he's not of age, and she has not thought proper to wait for his refusal.

Enter HASTINGS *and* MISS NEVILLE.

MRS. HARD. (*aside*) : What ! returned so soon ? I begin not to like it.

HASTINGS (*to* HARDCASTLE) : For my late attempt to fly off with your niece, let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back, to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's consent, I first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded in duty.

MISS NEVILLE : Since his death, I have been obliged to stoop to dissimulation to avoid oppression. In an hour of levity, I was ready even to give up my fortune to secure my choice. But I'm now recovered from the delusion, and hope from your tenderness what is denied me from a nearer connection.

MRS. HARD. : Pshaw, pshaw ! this is all but the whining end of a modern novel.

HARD. : Be it what it will, I'm glad they're come back to reclaim their due. Come hither, Tony, boy. Do you refuse this lady's hand whom I now offer you ?

TONY : What signifies my refusing ? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

HARD. : While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire to keep it secret. But since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare, you have been of age these three months.

TONY : Of age ! Am I of age, father ?

HARD. : Above three months.

TONY: Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. (*Taking* MISS NEVILLE'S *hand.*) Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of BLANK place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constance Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again !

SIR CHARLES : O brave 'Squire !

HASTINGS : My worthy friend !

MRS. HARD. : My undutiful offspring !

MARLOW : Joy, my dear George, I give you joy sincerely. And could I prevail upon my little tyrant here to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive, if you would return me the favour.

HASTINGS (*to* MISS HARDCASTLE) : Come, madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you and you must and shall have him.

HARD. (*joining their hands*) : And I say so, too. And Mr. Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So now to supper, to-morrow we shall gather all the poor of the parish about us, and the Mistakes of the Night shall be crowned with a merry morning ; so boy, take her ; as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is, that you may never be mistaken in the wife.

1777

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

(By RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN)

Goldsmith being himself prevented from following up the success of *She Stoops to Conquer*, Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816) stepped into the breach. Like Goldsmith, and like Farquhar, he was an Irishman. In 1775, within nine months of Goldsmith's death, *The Rivals* was produced at Covent Garden,

and after a doubtful opening (due to defective casting) quickly established both itself and its author. The production at Drury Lane on the 8th May, 1777 of *The School for Scandal* was facilitated by Sheridan's purchase (presumably out of the proceeds of *The Rivals*, and of an opera, *The Duenna*, in which he collaborated with his father-in-law, Dr. Linley) of the great Garrick's controlling interest in the theatre. It was a triumphant success, and was followed, two years later, by *The Critic*, a brilliant experiment on a smaller scale. With that, unfortunately, the erratic author's interest in the drama gave out. Probably he was bored by the fatuity of success. There is no pleasing some people. Or he may have been disgusted with the tone of the theatre. He turned to politics, to reap fresh laurels. But the " romance " of his career is common knowledge.

After Sheridan, the drama sank back into the mediocrity from which Goldsmith had sought to redeem it. The creative vitality of the people, during these periods of dramatic decadence, went into the novel.

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

Characters

Sir Peter Teazle	Crabtree
Sir Oliver Surface	Rowley
Sir Harry Bumper	Moses
Sir Benjamin Backbite	Trip
Joseph Surface	Lady Teazle
Charles Surface	Lady Sneerwell
Careless	Mrs. Candour
Snake	Maria

Gentlemen, Maid, *and* Servants

Scene—London.

ACT I

SCENE I.—Lady Sneerwell's *Dressing-room*

Lady Sneerwell *discovered at her toilet ;* Snake *drinking chocolate.*

Lady Sneer. : The paragraphs, you say, Mr. Snake, were all inserted ?

Snake : They were, madam ; and, as I copied them myself in a feigned hand, there can be no suspicion whence they came.

Lady Sneer. : Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with Captain Boastall ?

Snake : That's in as fine a train as your ladyship could wish. In the common course of things, I think it must reach Mrs. Clackitt's ears within four-and-twenty hours ; and then, you know, the business is as good as done.

Lady Sneer. : Why, truly, Mrs. Clackitt has a very pretty talent, and a great deal of industry.

Snake : True, madam, and has been tolerably successful in her day. To my knowledge, she has been the cause of six matches being broken off, and three sons being disinherited ; of four forced elopements, and as many close confinements ; nine separate maintenances, and two divorces. Nay, I have more than once traced her causing a *tête-à-tête* in the " Town and Country Magazine," when the parties, perhaps, had never seen each other's face before in the course of their lives.

Lady Sneer. : She certainly has talents, but her manner is gross.

Snake : 'Tis very true. She generally designs well, has a free tongue and a bold invention ; but her colouring is too dark, and her outlines often extravagant.

She wants that delicacy of tint, and mellowness of sneer, which distinguish your ladyship's scandal.

LADY SNEER. : You are partial, Snake.

SNAKE : Not in the least ; everybody allows that Lady Sneerwell can do more with a word or look than many can with the most laboured detail, even when they happen to have a little truth on their side to support it.

LADY SNEER. : Yes, my dear Snake ; and I am no hypocrite to deny the satisfaction I reap from the success of my efforts. Wounded myself, in the early part of my life, by the envenomed tongue of slander, I confess I have since known no pleasure equal to the reducing others to the level of my own injured reputation.

SNAKE : Nothing can be more natural. But, Lady Sneerwell, there is one affair in which you have lately employed me, wherein, I confess, I am at a loss to guess your motives.

LADY SNEER. : I conceive you mean with respect to my neighbour, Sir Peter Teazle, and his family ?

SNAKE : I do. Here are two young men, to whom Sir Peter has acted as a kind of guardian since their father's death ; the eldest possessing the most amiable character, and universally well spoken of—the youngest, the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character : the former an avowed admirer of your ladyship, and apparently your favourite ; the latter attached to Maria, Sir Peter's ward, and confessedly beloved by her. Now, on the face of these circumstances, it is utterly unaccountable to me, why you, the widow of a city knight, with a good jointure, should not close with the passion of a man of such character and expectations as Mr. Surface ; and more so why you should be so uncommonly earnest to destroy the mutual attachment subsisting between his brother Charles and Maria.

LADY SNEER. : Then, at once to unravel this mystery, I must inform you that love has no share whatever in the intercourse between Mr. Surface and me.

SNAKE : No !

LADY SNEER. : His real attachment is to Maria or her fortune ; but, finding in his brother a favoured rival, he has been obliged to mask his pretensions, and profit by my assistance.

SNAKE : Yet still I am more puzzled why you should interest yourself in his success.

LADY SNEER. : Heavens ! how dull you are ! Cannot you surmise the weakness which I hitherto, through shame, have concealed even from you ? Must I confess that Charles—that libertine, that extravagant, that bankrupt in fortune and reputation—that he it is for whom I am thus anxious and malicious, and to gain whom I would sacrifice everything ?

SNAKE : Now, indeed, your conduct appears consistent ; but how came you and Mr. Surface so confidential ?

LADY SNEER. : For our mutual interest. I have found him out a long time since. I know him to be artful, selfish, and malicious—in short, a sentimental knave ; while with Sir Peter, and indeed with all his acquaintance, he passes for a youthful miracle of prudence, good sense, and benevolence.

SNAKE : Yes ; yet Sir Peter vows he has not his equal in England ; and, above all, he praises him as a man of sentiment.

LADY SNEER. : True ; and with the assistance of his sentiment and hypocrisy he has brought Sir Peter entirely into his interest with regard to Maria ; while poor Charles has no friend in the house—though, I fear, he has a powerful one in Maria's heart, against whom we must direct our schemes.

Enter SERVANT.

SER. : Mr. Surface.

LADY SNEER. : Show him up.—(*Exit* SERVANT.) He generally calls about this time. I don't wonder at people giving him to me for a lover.

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

JOS. SURF. : My dear Lady Sneerwell, how do you do to-day? Mr. Snake, your most obedient.

LADY SNEER. : Snake has just been rallying me on our mutual attachment; but I have informed him of our real views. You know how useful he has been to us; and, believe me, the confidence is not ill-placed.

JOS. SURF. : Madam, it is impossible for me to suspect a man of Mr. Snake's sensibility and discernment.

LADY SNEER. : Well, well, no compliments now; but tell me when you saw your mistress, Maria—or, what is more material to me, your brother.

JOS. SURF. : I have not seen either since I left you; but I can inform you that they never meet. Some of your stories have taken a good effect on Maria.

LADY SNEER. : Ah, my dear Snake! the merit of this belongs to you. But do your brother's distresses increase?

JOS. SURF. : Every hour. I am told he has had another execution in the house yesterday. In short, his dissipation and extravagance exceed anything I have ever heard of.

LADY SNEER. : Poor Charles!

JOS. SURF. : True, madam; notwithstanding his vices, one can't help feeling for him. Poor Charles! I'm sure I wish it were in my power to be of any essential service to him; for the man who does not share in the distresses of a brother, even though merited by his own misconduct, deserves——

LADY SNEER. : O Lud! you are going to be moral, and forget that you are among friends.

JOS. SURF. : Egad, that's true! I'll keep that sentiment till I see Sir Peter. However, it is certainly a charity to rescue Maria from such a libertine, who, if he is to be reclaimed, can be so only by a person of your ladyship's superior accomplishments and understanding.

SNAKE : I believe, Lady Sneerwell, here's company coming: I'll go and copy the letter I mentioned to you. Mr. Surface, your most obedient.

JOS. SURF. : Sir, your very devoted.—(*Exit* SNAKE.) Lady Sneerwell, I am very sorry you have put any farther confidence in that fellow.

LADY SNEER : Why so?

JOS. SURF. : I have lately detected him in frequent conference with old Rowley, who was formerly my father's steward, and has never, you know, been a friend of mine.

LADY SNEER. : And do you think he would betray us?

JOS. SURF. : Nothing more likely: take my word for't, Lady Sneerwell, that fellow hasn't virtue enough to be faithful even to his own villany. Ah, Maria!

Enter MARIA.

LADY SNEER. : Maria, my dear, how do you do? What's the matter?

MAR. : Oh! there's that disagreeable lover of mine, Sir Benjamin Backbite, has just called at my guardian's, with his odious uncle, Crabtree; so I slipped out, and ran hither to avoid them.

LADY SNEER. : Is that all?

JOS. SURF. : If my brother Charles had been of the party, madam, perhaps you would not have been so much alarmed.

LADY SNEER. : Nay, now you are severe ; for I dare swear the truth of the matter is, Maria heard you were here. But, my dear, what has Sir Benjamin done, that you should avoid him so ?

MAR. : Oh, he has done nothing—but 'tis for what he has said : his conversation is a perpetual libel on all his acquaintance.

JOS. SURF. : Ay, and the worst of it is, there is no advantage in not knowing him ; for he'll abuse a stranger just as soon as his best friend : and his uncle's as bad.

LADY SNEER. : Nay, but we should make allowance ; Sir Benjamin is a wit and a poet.

MAR. : For my part, I own, madam, wit loses its respect with me, when I see it in company with malice. What do you think, Mr. Surface ?

JOS. SURF. : Certainly, madam ; to smile at the jest which plants a thorn in another's breast is to become a principal in the mischief.

LADY SNEER. : Psha ! there's no possibility of being witty without a little ill-nature : the malice of a good thing is the barb that makes it stick. What's your opinion, Mr. Surface ?

JOS. SURF. : To be sure, madam ; that conversation, where the spirit of raillery is suppressed, will ever appear tedious and insipid.

MAR. : Well, I'll not debate how far scandal may be allowable ; but in a man, I am sure, it is always contemptible. We have pride, envy, rivalship, and a thousand motives to depreciate each other ; but the male slanderer must have the cowardice of a woman before he can traduce one.

Re-enter SERVANT.

SER. : Madam, Mrs. Candour is below, and, if your ladyship's at leisure, will leave her carriage.

LADY SNEER. : Beg her to walk in.—(*Exit* SERVANT.) Now, Maria, here is a character to your taste ; for, though Mrs. Candour is a little talkative, everybody knows her to be the best-natured and best sort of woman.

MAR. : Yes, with a very gross affectation of good nature and benevolence, she does more mischief than the direct malice of old Crabtree.

JOS. SURF. : I'faith that's true, Lady Sneerwell : whenever I hear the current running against the characters of my friends, I never think them in such danger as when Candour undertakes their defence.

LADY SNEER. : Hush !—here she is !

Enter MRS. CANDOUR.

MRS. CAN. : My dear Lady Sneerwell, how have you been this century ?—Mr. Surface, what news do you hear ?—though indeed it is no matter, for I think one hears nothing else but scandal.

JOS. SURF. : Just so, indeed, ma'am.

MRS. CAN. : Oh, Maria ! child,—what, is the whole affair off between you and Charles ? His extravagance, I presume—the town talks of nothing else.

MAR. : I am very sorry, ma'am, the town has so little to do.

MRS. CAN. : True, true, child : but there's no stopping people's tongues. I own I was hurt to hear it, as I indeed was to learn, from the same quarter, that your guardian, Sir Peter, and Lady Teazle have not agreed lately as well as could be wished.

MAR. : 'Tis strangely impertinent for people to busy themselves so.

MRS. CAN. : Very true, child ; but what's to be done ? People will talk—there's no preventing it. Why, it was but yesterday I was told that Miss Gadabout had eloped with Sir Filagree Flirt. But, Lord ! there's no minding what one hears ; though, to be sure, I had this from very good authority.

MAR. : Such reports are highly scandalous.

MRS. CAN. : So they are, child—shameful, shameful ! But the world is so censorious, no character escapes. Lord, now who would have suspected your friend, Miss Prim, of an indiscretion ? Yet such is the ill-nature of people, that they say her uncle stopped her last week, just as she was stepping into the York mail with her dancing-master.

MAR. : I'll answer for't there are no grounds for that report.

MRS. CAN. : Ah, no foundation in the world, I dare swear : no more, probably, than for the story circulated last month, of Mrs. Festino's affair with Colonel Cassino—though, to be sure, that matter was never rightly cleared up.

JOS. SURF. : The license of invention some people take is monstrous indeed.

MAR. : 'Tis so ; but, in my opinion, those who report such things are equally culpable.

MRS. CAN. : To be sure they are ; tale-bearers are as bad as the tale-makers—'tis an old observation, and a very true one : but what's to be done, as I said before ? how will you prevent people from talking ? To-day, Mrs. Clackitt assured me, Mr. and Mrs. Honeymoon were at last become mere man and wife, like the rest of their acquaintance. She likewise hinted that a certain widow, in the next street, had got rid of her dropsy and recovered her shape in a most surprising manner. And at the same time Miss Tattle, who was by, affirmed, that Lord Buffalo had discovered his lady at a house of no extraordinary fame ; and that Sir Harry Bouquet and Tom Saunter were to measure swords on a similar provocation. But Lord, do you think I would report these things ! No, no ! tale-bearers, as I said before, are just as bad as the tale-makers.

JOS. SURF. : Ah ! Mrs. Candour, if everybody had your forbearance and good nature !

MRS. CAN. : I confess, Mr. Surface, I cannot bear to hear people attacked behind their backs ; and when ugly circumstances come out against our acquaintance I own I always love to think the best. By-the-by, I hope 'tis not true that your brother is absolutely ruined ?

JOS. SURF. : I am afraid his circumstances are very bad indeed, ma'am.

MRS. CAN. : Ah !—I heard so—but you must tell him to keep up his spirits ; everybody almost is in the same way : Lord Spindle, Sir Thomas Splint, Captain Quinze, and Mr. Nickit—all up, I hear, within this week ; so, if Charles is undone, he'll find half his acquaintance ruined too, and that, you know, is a consolation.

JOS. SURF. : Doubtless, ma'am—a very great one.

Re-enter SERVANT.

SER. : Mr. Crabtree and Sir Benjamin Backbite. [*Exit.*

LADY SNEER. : So, Maria, you see your lover pursues you ; positively you shan't escape.

Enter CRABTREE *and* SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

CRAB. : Lady Sneerwell, I kiss your hand. Mrs. Candour, I don't believe you are acquainted with my nephew, Sir Benjamin Backbite ? Egad, ma'am, he has a pretty wit, and is a pretty poet too. Isn't he, Lady Sneerwell ?

SIR BEN. : Oh, fie, uncle !

CRAB. : Nay, egad it's true : I back him at a rebus or a charade against the best rhymer in the kingdom. Has your ladyship heard the epigram he wrote last week on Lady Frizzle's feather catching fire ?—Do, Benjamin, repeat it, or the charade you made last night extempore at Mrs. Drowzie's conversazione.

Come now ; your first is the name of a fish, your second a great naval commander, and——

SIR BEN. : Uncle, now—pr'ythee——

CRAB. : I'faith, ma'am, 'twould surprise you to hear how ready he is at all these sort of things.

LADY SNEER. : I wonder, Sir Benjamin, you never publish anything.

SIR BEN. : To say truth, ma'am, 'tis very vulgar to print ; and, as my little productions are mostly satires and lampoons on particular people, I find they circulate more by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties. However, I have some love elegies, which, when favoured with this lady's smiles, I mean to give the public. [*Pointing to* MARIA.

CRAB. (*to* MARIA) : 'Fore heaven, ma'am, they'll immortalize you !—you will be handed down to posterity, like Petrarch's Laura, or Waller's Sacharissa.

SIR BEN. (*to* MARIA) : Yes, madam, I think you will like them, when you shall see them on a beautiful quarto page, where a neat rivulet of text shall meander through a meadow of margin. 'Fore Gad, they will be the most elegant things of their kind !

CRAB. : But, ladies, that's true—have you heard the news ?

MRS. CAN. : What, sir, do you mean the report of—

CRAB. : No, ma'am, that's not it.—Miss Nicely is going to be married to her own footman.

MRS. CAN. : Impossible !

CRAB. : Ask Sir Benjamin.

SIR BEN. : 'Tis very true, ma'am : everything is fixed, and the wedding liveries bespoke.

CRAB. : Yes—and they do say there were pressing reasons for it.

LADY SNEER. : Why, I have heard something of this before.

MRS. CAN. : It can't be—and I wonder any one should believe such a story of so prudent a lady as Miss Nicely.

SIR BEN. : O Lud ! ma'am, that's the very reason 'twas believed at once. She has always been so cautious and so reserved, that everybody was sure there was some reason for it at bottom.

MRS. CAN. : Why, to be sure, a tale of scandal is as fatal to the credit of a prudent lady of her stamp as a fever is generally to those of the strongest constitutions. But there is a sort of puny sickly reputation, that is always ailing, yet will outlive the robuster characters of a hundred prudes.

SIR BEN. : True, madam, there are valetudinarians in reputation as well as constitution, who, being conscious of their weak part, avoid the least breath of air, and supply their want of stamina by care and circumspection.

MRS. CAN. : Well, but this may be all a mistake. You know, Sir Benjamin, very trifling circumstances often give rise to the most injurious tales.

CRAB. : That they do, I'll be sworn, ma'am. Did you ever hear how Miss Piper came to lose her lover and her character last summer at Tunbridge ?—Sir Benjamin, you remember it ?

SIR BEN. : Oh, to be sure !—the most whimsical circumstance.

LADY SNEER. : How was it, pray ?

CRAB. : Why, one evening, at Mrs. Ponto's assembly, the conversation happened to turn on the breeding Nova Scotia sheep in this country. Says a young lady in company, I have known instances of it ; for Miss Letitia Piper, a first cousin of mine, had a Nova Scotia sheep that produced her twins. " What ! " cries the Lady Dowager Dundizzy (who you know is as deaf as a post), " has Miss Piper had twins ? " This mistake, as you may imagine, threw the whole company into a fit of laughter. However, 'twas the next morning everywhere reported, and in a few days believed by the whole town,

that Miss Letitia Piper had actually been brought to bed of a fine boy and girl : and in less than a week there were some people who could name the father, and the farm-house where the babies were put to nurse.

LADY SNEER. : Strange, indeed !

CRAB. : Matter of fact, I assure you. O Lud ! Mr. Surface, pray is it true that your uncle, Sir Oliver, is coming home ?

JOS. SURF. : Not that I know of, indeed, sir.

CRAB. : He has been in the East Indies a long time. You can scarcely remember him, I believe ? Sad comfort, whenever he returns, to hear how your brother has gone on !

JOS. SURF. : Charles has been imprudent, sir, to be sure ; but I hope no busy people have already prejudiced Sir Oliver against him. He may reform.

SIR BEN. : To be sure he may ; for my part I never believed him to be so utterly void of principle as people say ; and though he has lost all his friends, I am told nobody is better spoken of by the Jews.

CRAB. : That's true, egad, nephew. If the old Jewry was a ward, I believe Charles would be an alderman : no man more popular there, 'for Gad ! I hear he pays as many annuities as the Irish tontine ; and that, whenever he is sick, they have prayers for the recovery of his health in all the synagogues.

SIR BEN. : Yet no man lives in greater splendour. They tell me, when he entertains his friends he will sit down to dinner with a dozen of his own securities ; have a score of tradesmen in the antechamber, and an officer behind every guest's chair.

JOS. SURF. : This may be entertainment to you, gentlemen, but you pay very little regard to the feelings of a brother.

MAR. (*aside*) : Their malice is intolerable !—(*Aloud.*) Lady Sneerwell, I must wish you a good morning : I'm not very well. [*Exit.*

MRS. CAN. : O dear ! she changes colour very much.

LADY SNEER. : Do, Mrs. Candour, follow her ; she may want your assistance.

MRS. CAN. : That I will, with all my soul, ma'am.—Poor dear girl, who knows what her situation may be ! [*Exit.*

LADY SNEER. : 'Twas nothing but that she could not bear to hear Charles reflected on, notwithstanding their difference.

SIR BEN. : The young lady's *penchant* is obvious.

CRAB. : But, Benjamin, you must not give up the pursuit for that : follow her, and put her into good humour. Repeat her some of your own verses. Come, I'll assist you.

SIR BEN. : Mr. Surface, I did not mean to hurt you ; but depend on't your brother is utterly undone.

CRAB. : O Lud, ay ! undone as ever man was—can't raise a guinea.

SIR BEN. : And everything sold, I'm told, that was movable.

CRAB. : I have seen one that was at his house. Not a thing left but some empty bottles that were overlooked, and the family pictures, which I believe are framed in the wainscots.

SIR BEN. : And I'm very sorry also to hear some bad stories against him. [*Going.*

CRAB. : Oh, he has done many mean things, that's certain.

SIR BEN. : But, however, as he's your brother—— [*Going.*

CRAB. : We'll tell you all another opportunity.

[*Exeunt* CRABTREE *and* SIR BENJAMIN.

LADY SNEER. : Ha, ha ! 'tis very hard for them to leave a subject they have not quite run down.

JOS. SURF. : And I believe the abuse was no more acceptable to your ladyship than to Maria.

LADY SNEER. : I doubt her affections are further engaged than we imagine. But the family are to be here this evening, so you may as well dine where you are, and we shall have an opportunity of observing further ; in the meantime, I'll go and plot mischief, and you shall study sentiment. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

SIR PET : When an old bachelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect ? 'Tis now six months since Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men—and I have been the most miserable dog ever since ! We tift a little going to church, and fairly quarrelled before the bells had done ringing. I was more than once nearly choked with gall during the honeymoon, and had lost all comfort in life before my friends had done wishing me joy. Yet I chose with caution—a girl bred wholly in the country, who never knew luxury beyond one silk gown, nor dissipation above the annual gala of a race ball. Yet she now plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of fashion and the town, with as ready a grace as if she never had seen a bush or a grass-plot out of Grosvenor Square ! I am sneered at by all my acquaintance, and paragraphed in the newspapers. She dissipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humours ; yet the worst of it is, I doubt I love her, or I should never bear all this. However, I'll never be weak enough to own it.

Enter ROWLEY.

ROW. : Oh ! Sir Peter, your servant : how is it with you, sir ?

SIR PET. : Very bad, Master Rowley, very bad. I meet with nothing but crosses and vexations.

ROW. : What can have happened since yesterday ?

SIR PET. : A good question to a married man !

ROW. : Nay, I'm sure, Sir Peter, your lady can't be the cause of your uneasiness.

SIR PET. : Why, has anybody told you she was dead ?

ROW. : Come, come, Sir Peter, you love her, notwithstanding your tempers don't exactly agree.

SIR PET. : But the fault is entirely hers, Master Rowley. I am, myself, the sweetest-tempered man alive, and hate a teasing temper ; and so I tell her a hundred times a day.

ROW. : Indeed !

SIR PET. : Ay ; and what is very extraordinary, in all our disputes she is always in the wrong ! But Lady Sneerwell, and the set she meets at her house, encourage the perverseness of her disposition. Then, to complete my vexation, Maria, my ward, whom I ought to have the power of a father over, is determined to turn rebel too, and absolutely refuses the man whom I have long resolved on for her husband ; meaning, I suppose, to bestow herself on his profligate brother.

ROW. : You know, Sir Peter, I have always taken the liberty to differ with you on the subject of these two young gentlemen. I only wish you may not be deceived in your opinion of the elder. For Charles, my life on't ! he will retrieve his errors yet. Their worthy father, once my honoured master, was, at his years, nearly as wild a spark ; yet, when he died, he did not leave a more benevolent heart to lament his loss.

SIR PET. : You are wrong, Master Rowley. On their father's death, you know, I acted as a kind of guardian to them both, till their uncle Sir Oliver's liberality gave them an early independence : of course, no person could have

more opportunities of judging of their hearts, and I was never mistaken in my life. Joseph is indeed a model for the young men of the age. He is a man of sentiment, and acts up to the sentiments he professes ; but, for the other, take my word for't, if he had any grain of virtue by descent, he has dissipated it with the rest of his inheritance. Ah ! my old friend, Sir Oliver, will be deeply mortified when he finds how part of his bounty has been misapplied.

ROW. : I am sorry to find you so violent against the young man, because this may be the most critical period of his fortune. I came hither with news that will surprise you.

SIR PET. : What ! let me hear.

ROW. : Sir Oliver is arrived, and at this moment in town.

SIR PET. : How ! you astonish me ! I thought you did not expect him this month.

ROW. : I did not : but his passage has been remarkably quick.

SIR PET. : Egad, I shall rejoice to see my old friend. 'Tis sixteen years since we met. We have had many a day together : but does he still enjoin us not to inform his nephews of his arrival ?

ROW. : Most strictly. He means, before it is known, to make some trial of their dispositions.

SIR PET. : Ah ! There needs no art to discover their merits—however, he shall have his way ; but, pray, does he know I am married ?

ROW. : Yes, and will soon wish you joy.

SIR PET. : What, as we drink health to a friend in consumption ! Ah, Oliver will laugh at me. We used to rail at matrimony together, but he has been steady to his text. Well, he must be soon at my house, though—I'll instantly give orders for his reception. But, Master Rowley, don't drop a word that Lady Teazle and I ever disagree.

ROW. : By no means.

SIR PET. : For I should never be able to stand Noll's jokes ; so I'll have him think, Lord forgive me ! that we are a very happy couple.

ROW. : I understand you :—but then you must be very careful not to differ while he is in the house with you.

SIR PET. : Egad, and so we must—and that's impossible. Ah ! Master Rowley, when an old bachelor marries a young wife, he deserves—no—the crime carries its punishment along with it. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*A Room in* SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter SIR PETER *and* LADY TEAZLE.

SIR PET. : Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I'll not bear it !

LADY TEAZ. : Sir Peter, Sir Peter, you may bear it or not, as you please ; but I ought to have my own way in everything, and what's more, I will too. What though I was educated in the country, I know very well that women of fashion in London are accountable to nobody after they are married.

SIR PET. : Very well, ma'am, very well ; so a husband is to have no influence, no authority ?

LADY TEAZ. : Authority ! No, to be sure :—if you wanted authority over me, you should have adopted me, and not married me : I am sure you were old enough.

SIR PET. : Old enough !—ay, there it is ! Well, well, Lady Teazle, though my life may be made unhappy by your temper, I'll not be ruined by your extravagance !

LADY TEAZ. : My extravagance ! I'm sure I'm not more extravagant than a woman of fashion ought to be.

SIR PET. : No, no, madam, you shall throw away no more sums on such unmeaning luxury. 'Slife ! to spend as much to furnish your dressing-room with flowers in winter as would suffice to turn the Pantheon into a green house, and give a *fête champêtre* at Christmas.

LADY TEAZ. : And am I to blame, Sir Peter, because flowers are dear in cold weather ? You should find fault with the climate, and not with me. For my part, I'm sure I wish it was spring all the year round, and that roses grew under our feet !

SIR PET. : Oons ! madam—if you had been born to this, I shouldn't wonder at your talking thus ; but you forget what your situation was when I married you.

LADY TEAZ. : No, no, I don't ; 'twas a very disagreeable one, or I should never have married you.

SIR PET. : Yes, yes, madam, you were then in somewhat a humbler style—the daughter of a plain country squire. Recollect, Lady Teazle, when I saw you first sitting at your tambour, in a pretty figured linen gown, with a bunch of keys at your side, your hair combed smooth over a roll, and your apartment hung round with fruits in worsted, of your own working.

LADY TEAZ. : Oh, yes ! I remember it very well, and a curious life I led. My daily occupation to inspect the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt-book, and comb my aunt Deborah's lapdog.

SIR PET. : Yes, yes, ma'am, 'twas so indeed.

LADY TEAZ. : And then, you know, my evening amusements ! To draw patterns for ruffles, which I had not the materials to make up ; to play Pope Joan with the Curate ; to read a sermon to my aunt ; or to be stuck down to an old spinet to strum my father to sleep after a fox-chase.

SIR PET. : I am glad you have so good a memory. Yes, madam, these were the recreations I took you from ; but now you must have your coach—*vis-à-vis*—and three powdered footmen before your chair ; and, in the summer, a pair of white cats to draw you to Kensington Gardens. No recollection, I suppose, when you were content to ride double, behind the butler, on a docked coach-horse ?

LADY TEAZ. : No—I swear I never did that ; I deny the butler and the coach-horse.

SIR PET. : This, madam, was your situation ; and what have I done for you ? I have made you a woman of fashion, of fortune, of rank—in short, I have made you my wife.

LADY TEAZ. : Well, then, and there is but one thing more you can make me to add to the obligation, that is——

SIR PET. : My widow, I suppose ?

LADY TEAZ. : Hem ! Hem !

SIR PET. : I thank you, madam—but don't flatter yourself ; for, though your ill-conduct may disturb my peace of mind, it shall never break my heart, I promise you : however, I am equally obliged to you for the hint.

LADY TEAZ. : Then why will you endeavour to make yourself so disagreeable to me, and thwart me in every little elegant expense ?

SIR PET. : 'Slife, madam, I say, had you any of these little elegant expenses when you married me ?

LADY TEAZ. : Lud, Sir Peter ! would you have me be out of the fashion ?

SIR PET. : The fashion, indeed ! what had you to do with the fashion before you married me ?

LADY TEAZ. : For my part, I should think you would like to have your wife thought a woman of taste.

SIR PET. : Ay—there again—taste ! Zounds ! madam, you had no taste when you married me !

LADY TEAZ. : That's very true, indeed, Sir Peter ! and, after having married you, I should never pretend to taste again, I allow. But now, Sir Peter, since we have finished our daily jangle, I presume I may go to my engagement at Lady Sneerwell's ?

SIR PET. : Ay, there's another precious circumstance—a charming set of acquaintance you have made there !

LADY TEAZ. : Nay, Sir Peter, they are all people of rank and fortune, and remarkably tenacious of reputation.

SIR PET. : Yes, egad, they are tenacious of reputation with a vengeance ; for they don't choose anybody should have a character but themselves ! Such a crew ! Ah ! many a wretch has rid on a hurdle who has done less mischief than these utterers of forged tales, coiners of scandal, and clippers of reputation.

LADY TEAZ. : What, would you restrain the freedom of speech ?

SIR PET. : Ah ! they have made you just as bad as any one of the society.

LADY TEAZ. : Why, I believe I do bear a part with a tolerable grace. But I vow I bear no malice against the people I abuse : when I say an ill-natured thing, 'tis out of pure good humour ; and I take it for granted they deal exactly in the same manner with me. But, Sir Peter, you know you promised to come to Lady Sneerwell's too.

SIR PET. : Well, well, I'll call in just to look after my own character.

LADY TEAZ. : Then, indeed, you must make haste after me or you'll be too late. So good-bye to ye. [*Exit.*

SIR PET. : So—I have gained much by my intended expostulation ! Yet with what a charming air she contradicts everything I say, and how pleasantly she shows her contempt for my authority ! Well, though I can't make her love me, there is great satisfaction in quarrelling with her ; and I think she never appears to such advantage as when she is doing everything in her power to plague me. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* LADY SNEERWELL'S *House.*

LADY SNEERWELL, MRS. CANDOUR, CRABTREE, SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE, *and* JOSEPH SURFACE, *discovered.*

LADY SNEER. : Nay, positively, we will hear it.

JOS. SURF. : Yes, yes, the epigram, by all means.

SIR BEN. : O plague on't, uncle ! 'tis mere nonsense.

CRAB. : No, no ; 'fore Gad, very clever for an extempore !

SIR BEN. : But, ladies, you should be acquainted with the circumstance. You must know, that one day last week, as Lady Betty Curricle was taking the dust in Hyde Park, in a sort of duodecimo phaeton, she desired me to write some verses on her ponies ; upon which, I took out my pocket-book, and in one moment produced the following :—

> Sure never were seen two such beautiful ponies ;
> Other horses are clowns, but these macaronies :
> To give them this title I am sure can't be wrong.
> Their legs are so slim, and their tails are so long.

CRAB. : There, ladies, done in the smack of a whip, and on horseback too.

JOS. SURF. : A very Phœbus, mounted—indeed, Sir Benjamin !

SIR BEN. : Oh dear, sir !—trifles—trifles.—

Enter LADY TEAZLE *and* MARIA.

MRS. CAN. : I must have a copy.

LADY SNEER. : Lady Teazle, I hope we shall see Sir Peter ?

LADY TEAZ. : I believe he'll wait on your ladyship presently.

LADY SNEER. : Maria, my love, you look grave. Come, you shall sit down to piquet with Mr. Surface.

MAR. : I take very little pleasure in cards—however, I'll do as your ladyship pleases.

LADY TEAZ. : I am surprised Mr. Surface should sit down with her ; I thought he would have embraced this opportunity of speaking to me before Sir Peter came. [*Aside.*

MRS. CAN. : Now, I'll die ; but you are so scandalous, I'll forswear your society.

LADY TEAZ. : What's the matter, Mrs. Candour ?

MRS. CAN. : They'll not allow our friend Miss Vermillion to be handsome.

LADY SNEER. : Oh, surely she is a pretty woman.

CRAB. : I am very glad you think so, ma'am.

MRS. CAN. : She has a charming fresh colour.

LADY TEAZ. : Yes, when it is fresh put on.

MRS. CAN. : Oh, fie ! I'll swear her colour is natural : I have seen it come and go !

LADY TEAZ. : I dare swear you have, ma'am : it goes off at night, and comes again in the morning.

SIR BEN. : True, ma'am, it not only comes and goes ; but, what's more, egad, her maid can fetch and carry it !

MRS. CAN. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! how I hate to hear you talk so ! But surely, now, her sister is, or was, very handsome.

CRAB. : Who ? Mrs. Evergreen ? O Lord ! she's six-and-fifty if she's an hour !

MRS. CAN. : Now positively you wrong her ; fifty-two or fifty-three is the utmost—and I don't think she looks more.

SIR BEN. : Ah ! there's no judging by her looks, unless one could see her face.

LADY SNEER. : Well, well, if Mrs. Evergreen does take some pains to repair the ravages of time, you must allow she effects it with great ingenuity ; and surely that's better than the careless manner in which the widow Ochre caulks her wrinkles.

SIR BEN. : Nay, now, Lady Sneerwell, you are severe upon the widow. Come, come, 'tis not that she paints so ill—but, when she has finished her face, she joins it on so badly to her neck, that she looks like a mended statue, in which the connoisseur may see at once that the head's modern, though the trunk's antique !

CRAB. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! Well said, nephew !

MRS. CAN. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! Well, you make me laugh ; but I vow I hate you for it. What do you think of Miss Simper ?

SIR BEN. : Why, she has very pretty teeth.

LADY TEAZ. : Yes ; and on that account, when she is neither speaking nor laughing (which very seldom happens), she never absolutely shuts her mouth, but leaves it always on ajar, as it were—thus. [*Shows her teeth.*

MRS. CAN. : How can you be so ill-natured ?

LADY TEAZ. : Nay, I allow even that's better than the pains Mrs. Prim takes to conceal her losses in front. She draws her mouth till it positively resembles the aperture of a poor's-box, and all her words appear to slide out edgewise, as it were—thus : *How do you do, madam ? Yes, madam.*

LADY SNEER. : Very well, Lady Teazle ; I see you can be a little severe.

LADY TEAZ. : In defence of a friend it is but justice. But here comes Sir Peter to spoil our pleasantry.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

SIR PET. : Ladies, your most obedient—(*Aside.*) Mercy on me, here is the whole set ! a character dead at every word, I suppose.

MRS. CAN. : I am rejoiced you are come, Sir Peter. They have been so censorious—and Lady Teazle as bad as any one.

SIR PET. : That must be very distressing to you, Mrs. Candour, I dare swear.

MRS. CAN. : Oh, they will allow good qualities to nobody ; not even good nature to our friend Mrs. Pursy.

LADY TEAZ. : What, the fat dowager who was at Mrs. Quadrille's last night ?

MRS. CAN. : Nay, her bulk is her misfortune ; and, when she takes so much pains to get rid of it, you ought not to reflect on her.

LADY SNEER. : That's very true, indeed.

LADY TEAZ. : Yes, I know she almost lives on acids and small whey ; laces herself by pulleys ; and often, in the hottest noon in summer, you may see her on a little squat pony, with her hair plaited up behind like a drummer's and puffing round the Ring on a full trot.

MRS. CAN. : I thank you, Lady Teazle, for defending her.

SIR PET. : Yes, a good defence, truly.

MRS. CAN. : Truly, Lady Teazle is as censorious as Miss Sallow.

CRAB. : Yes, and she is a curious being to pretend to be censorious—an awkward gawky, without any one good point under heaven.

MRS. CAN. : Positively you shall not be so very severe. Miss Sallow is a near relation of mine by marriage, and, as for her person, great allowance is to be made ; for, let me tell you, a woman labours under many disadvantages who tries to pass for a girl of six-and-thirty.

LADY TEAZ. : Though, surely, she is handsome still—and for the weakness in her eyes, considering how much she reads by candle-light, it is not to be wondered at.

MRS. CAN. : True ; and then as to her manner, upon my word I think it is particularly graceful, considering she never had the least education ; for you know her mother was a Welsh milliner, and her father a sugar-baker at Bristol.

SIR BEN. : Ah ! you are both of you too good-natured !

SIR PET. : Yes, damned good-natured ! This their own relation ! mercy on me ! [*Aside.*

MRS. CAN. : For my part, I own I cannot bear to hear a friend ill-spoken of.

SIR PET. : No, to be sure !

SIR BEN. : Oh ! you are of a moral turn. Mrs. Candour and I can sit for an hour and hear Lady Stucco talk sentiment.

LADY TEAZ. : Nay, I vow Lady Stucco is very well with the dessert after dinner ; for she's just like the French fruit one cracks for mottoes—made up of paint and proverb.

MRS. CAN. : Well, I will never join in ridiculing a friend ; and so I constantly tell my cousin Ogle, and you all know what pretensions she has to be critical on beauty.

CRAB. : Oh, to be sure ! she has herself the oddest countenance that ever was seen ; 'tis a collection of features from all the different countries of the globe.

SIR BEN. : So she has, indeed—an Irish front——

CRAB. : Caledonian locks——

SIR BEN. : Dutch nose——

CRAB. : Austrian lips——

SIR BEN. : Complexion of a Spaniard——

CRAB. : And teeth *à la Chinoise*——

SIR BEN. : In short, her face resembles a *table d'hôte* at Spa—where no two guests are of a nation——

CRAB. : Or a congress at the close of a general war—wherein all the members, even to her eyes, appear to have a different interest, and her nose and chin are the only parties likely to join issue.

MRS. CAN. : Ha ! ha ! ha !

SIR PET. : Mercy on my life !—a person they dine with twice a week. [*Aside.*

LADY SNEER. : Go—go—you are a couple of provoking Toads.

MRS. CAN. : Nay, but I vow you shall not carry the laugh off so—for give me leave to say, that Mrs. Ogle——

SIR PET. : Madam, madam, I beg your pardon—there's no stopping these good gentlemen's tongues. But when I tell you, Mrs. Candour, that the lady they are abusing is a particular friend of mine, I hope you'll not take her part.

LADY SNEER. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! well said, Sir Peter ! but you are a cruel creature —too phlematic yourself for a jest, and too peevish to allow wit in others.

SIR PET. : Ah, madam, true wit is more nearly allied to good nature than your ladyship is aware of.

LADY TEAZ. : True, Sir Peter : I believe they are so near akin that they can never be united.

SIR BEN. : Or rather, madam, suppose them man and wife, because one seldom sees them together.

LADY TEAZ. : But Sir Peter is such an enemy to scandal, I believe he would have it put down by parliament.

SIR PET. : 'Fore heaven, madam, if they were to consider the sporting with reputation of as much importance as poaching on manors, and pass an act for the preservation of fame, I believe many would thank them for the bill.

LADY SNEER. : O Lud ! Sir Peter ; would you deprive us of our privileges ?

SIR PET. : Ay, madam ; and then no person should be permitted to kill characters and run down reputations, but qualified old maids and disappointed widows.

LADY SNEER. : Go, you monster !

MRS. CAN. : But, surely, you would not be quite so severe on those who only report what they hear ?

SIR PET. : Yes, madam, I would have law merchant for them too ; and in all cases of slander currency, whenever the drawer of the lie was not to be found, the injured parties should have a right to come on any of the indorsers.

CRAB. : Well, for my part, I believe there never was a scandalous tale without some foundation.

LADY SNEER. : Come, ladies, shall we sit down to cards in the next room ?

Enter SERVANT, *who whispers* SIR PETER.

SIR PET. : I'll be with them directly.—(*Exit* SERVANT.) I'll get away unperceived. [*Aside*

LADY SNEER. : Sir Peter, you are not going to leave us ?

SIR PET. : Your ladyship must excuse me ; I'm called away by particular business. But I leave my character behind me. [*Exit*

SIR BEN. : Well—certainly, Lady Teazle, that lord of yours is a strange being : I could tell you some stories of him would make you laugh heartily if he were not your husband.

LADY TEAZ. : Oh, pray don't mind that ; come, do let's hear them.

[*Exeunt all but* JOSEPH SURFACE *and* MARIA

Jos. Surf. : Maria, I see, you have no satisfaction in this society.

Mar. : How is it possible I should ? If to raise malicious smiles at the infirmities or misfortunes of those who have never injured us be the province of wit or humour, Heaven grant me a double portion of dulness !

Jos. Surf. : Yet they appear more ill-natured than they are ; they have no malice at heart.

Mar. : Then is their conduct still more contemptible ; for, in my opinion, nothing could excuse the intemperance of their tongues but a natural and uncontrollable bitterness of mind.

Jos. Surf. : Undoubtedly, madam ; and it has always been a sentiment of mine, that to propagate a malicious truth wantonly is more despicable than to falsify from revenge. But can you, Maria, feel thus for others, and be unkind to me alone ? Is hope to be denied the tenderest passion ?

Mar. : Why will you distress me by renewing this subject ?

Jos. Surf. : Ah, Maria ! you would not treat me thus, and oppose your guardian, Sir Peter's will, but that I see that profligate Charles is still a favoured rival.

Mar. : Ungenerously urged ! But, whatever my sentiments are for that unfortunate young man, be assured I shall not feel more bound to give him up, because his distresses have lost him the regard even of a brother.

Jos. Surf. : Nay, but, Maria, do not leave me with a frown : by all that's honest, I swear—— [*Kneels.*

Re-enter Lady Teazle *behind.*

(*Aside.*) Gad's life, here's Lady Teazle.—(*Aloud to* Maria.) You must not—no, you shall not—for, though I have the greatest regard for Lady Teazle——

Mar. : Lady Teazle !

Jos. Surf. : Yet were Sir Peter to suspect——

Lady Teaz. (*coming forward*) : What is this, pray ? Do you take her for me ?—Child, you are wanted in the next room.—(*Exit* Maria.) What is all this, pray ?

Jos. Surf. : Oh, the most unlucky circumstance in nature ! Maria has somehow suspected the tender concern I have for your happiness, and threatened to acquaint Sir Peter with her suspicions, and I was just endeavouring to reason with her when you came in.

Lady Teaz. : Indeed ! but you seemed to adopt a very tender mode of reasoning—do you usually argue on your knees ?

Jos. Surf. : Oh, she's a child, and I thought a little bombast——but, Lady Teazle, when are you to give me your judgment on my library, as you promised ?

Lady Teaz. : No, no ; I begin to think it would be imprudent, and you know I admit you as a lover no farther than fashion requires.

Jos. Surf. : True—a mere Platonic cicisbeo, what every wife is entitled to.

Lady Teaz. : Certainly, one must not be out of the fashion. However, I have so many of my country prejudices left, that, though Sir Peter's ill humour may vex me ever so, it never shall provoke me to——

Jos. Surf. : The only revenge in your power. Well, I applaud your moderation.

Lady Teaz. : Go—you are an insinuating wretch ! But we shall be missed—let us join the company.

Jos. Surf. : But we had best not return together.

Lady Teaz. : Well, don't stay ; for Maria shan't come to hear any more of your reasoning, I promise you. [*Exit.*

Jos. Surf. : A curious dilemma, truly, my politics have run me into ! I wanted, at first, only to ingratiate myself with Lady Teazle, that she might not be my enemy with Maria ; and I have, I don't know how, become her serious

lover. Sincerely I begin to wish I had never made such a point of gaining so very good a character, for it has led me into so many cursed rogueries that I doubt I shall be exposed at last. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in* SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* ROWLEY.

SIR OLIV. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! so my old friend is married, hey ?—a young wife out of the country. Ha ! ha ! ha ! that he should have stood bluff to old bachelor so long, and sink into a husband at last !

ROW. : But you must not rally him on the subject, Sir Oliver ; 'tis a tender point, I assure you, though he has been married only seven months.

SIR OLIV. : Then he has been just half a year on the stool of repentance !—Poor Peter ! But you say he has entirely given up Charles—never sees him, hey ?

ROW. : His prejudice against him is astonishing, and I am sure greatly increased by a jealousy of him and Lady Teazle, which he has industriously been led into by a scandalous society in the neighbourhood, who have contributed not a little to Charles's ill name. Whereas the truth is, I believe, if the lady is partial to either of them, his brother is the favourite.

SIR OLIV. : Ay, I know there are a set of malicious, prating, prudent gossips, both male and female, who murder characters to kill time, and will rob a young fellow of his good name before he has years to know the value of it. But I am not to be prejudiced against my nephew by such, I promise you ! No, no : if Charles has done nothing false or mean, I shall compound for his extravagance.

ROW. : Then, my life on't, you will reclaim him. Ah, sir, it gives me new life to find that your heart is not turned against him, and that the son of my good old master has one friend, however, left.

SIR OLIV. : What ! shall I forget, Master Rowley, when I was at his years myself? Egad, my brother and I were neither of us very prudent youths ; and yet, I believe, you have not seen many better men than your old master was ?

ROW. : Sir, 'tis this reflection gives me assurance that Charles may yet be a credit to his family. But here comes Sir Peter.

SIR OLIV. : Egad, so he does ! Mercy on me, he's greatly altered, and seems to have a settled married look ! One may read husband in his face at this distance !

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

SIR PET. : Ha ! Sir Oliver—my old friend ! Welcome to England a thousand times !

SIR OLIV. : Thank you, thank you, Sir Peter ! and i'faith I am glad to find you well, believe me !

SIR PET. : Oh ! 'tis a long time since we met—fifteen years, I doubt, Sir Oliver, and many a cross accident in the time.

SIR OLIV. : Ay, I have had my share. But, what ! I find you are married, hey, my old boy ? Well, well, it can't be helped ; and so—I wish you joy with all my heart !

SIR PET. : Thank you, thank you, Sir Oliver.—Yes, I have entered into—the happy state ; but we'll not talk of that now.

SIR. OLIV. : True, true, Sir Peter ; old friends should not begin on grievances at first meeting. No, no, no.

ROW. (*aside to* SIR OLIVER) : Take care, pray, sir.

IR OLIV. : Well, so one of my nephews is a wild rogue, hey ?
IR PET. : Wild ! Ah ! my old friend, I grieve for your disappointment there ; he's a lost young man, indeed. However, his brother will make you amends ; Joseph is, indeed, what a youth should be—everybody in the world speaks well of him.
IR OLIV. : I am sorry to hear it ; he has too good a character to be an honest fellow. Everybody speaks well of him ! Psha ! then he has bowed as low to knaves and fools as to the honest dignity of genius and virtue.
IR PET. : What, Sir Oliver ! do you blame him for not making enemies ?
IR OLIV. : Yes, if he has merit enough to deserve them.
IR PET. : Well, well—you'll be convinced when you know him. 'Tis edification to hear him converse ; he professes the noblest sentiments.
IR OLIV. : Oh, plague of his sentiments ! If he salutes me with a scrap of morality in his mouth, I shall be sick directly. But, however, don't mistake me, Sir Peter ; I don't mean to defend Charles's errors : but, before I form my judgment of either of them, I intend to make a trial of their hearts ; and my friend Rowley and I have planned something for the purpose.
OW. : And Sir Peter shall own for once he has been mistaken.
IR PET. : Oh, my life on Joseph's honour !
IR OLIV. : Well—come, give us a bottle of good wine, and we'll drink the lads' health, and tell you our scheme.
IR PET. : *Allons*, then !
IR OLIV. : And don't, Sir Peter, be so severe against your old friend's son. Odds my life ! I am not sorry that he has run out of the course a little : for my part, I hate to see prudence clinging to the green suckers of youth ; 'tis like ivy round a sapling, and spoils the growth of the tree. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III

SCENE I.—*A Room in* SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, *and* ROWLEY.

SIR PET. : Well, then, we will see this fellow first, and have our wine afterwards. But how is this, Master Rowley ? I don't see the jet of your scheme.
ROW. : Why, sir, this Mr. Stanley, whom I was speaking of, is nearly related to them by their mother. He was once a merchant in Dublin, but has been ruined by a series of undeserved misfortunes. He has applied, by letter, since his confinement, both to Mr. Surface and Charles : from the former he has received nothing but evasive promises of future service, while Charles has done all that his extravagance has left him power to do ; and he is, at this time, endeavouring to raise a sum of money, part of which, in the midst of his own distresses, I know he intends for the service of poor Stanley.
SIR OLIV. : Ah ! he is my brother's son.
SIR PET. : Well, but how is Sir Oliver personally to——
ROW. : Why, sir, I will inform Charles and his brother that Stanley has obtained permission to apply personally to his friends ; and, as they have neither of them ever seen him, let Sir Oliver assume his character, and he will have a fair opportunity of judging, at least, of the benevolence of their dispositions : and believe me, sir, you will find in the youngest brother one who, in the midst of folly and dissipation, has still, as our immortal bard expresses it,—

" a heart to pity, and a hand
Open as day, for melting charity."

SIR PET. : Psha ! What signifies his having an open hand or purse either, when he has nothing left to give ? Well, well, make the trial, if you please. But where is the fellow whom you brought for Sir Oliver to examine, relative to Charles's affairs ?

ROW. : Below, waiting his commands, and no one can give him better intelligence.—This, Sir Oliver, is a friendly Jew, who, to do him justice, has done everything in his power to bring your nephew to a proper sense of his extravagance.

SIR PET. : Pray let us have him in.

ROW. : Desire Mr. Moses to walk upstairs. [*Calls to* SERVANT.

SIR PET. : But, pray, why should you suppose he will speak the truth ?

ROW. : Oh, I have convinced him that he has no chance of recovering certain sums advanced to Charles but through the bounty of Sir Oliver, who he knows is arrived ; so that you may depend on his fidelity to his own interests. I have also another evidence in my power, one Snake, whom I have detected in a matter little short of forgery, and shall shortly produce to remove some of your prejudices, Sir Peter, relative to Charles and Lady Teazle.

SIR PET. : I have heard too much on that subject.

ROW. : Here comes the honest Israelite.

Enter MOSES.

—This is Sir Oliver.

SIR OLIV. : Sir, I understand you have lately had great dealings with my nephew Charles.

MOS. : Yes, Sir Oliver, I have done all I could for him ; but he was ruined before he came to me for assistance.

SIR OLIV. : That was unlucky, truly ; for you have had no opportunity of showing your talents.

MOS. : None at all ; I hadn't the pleasure of knowing his distresses till he was some thousands worse than nothing.

SIR OLIV. : Unfortunate, indeed ! But I suppose you have done all in your power for him, honest Moses ?

MOS. : Yes, he knows that. This very evening I was to have brought him a gentleman from the city, who does not know him, and will, I believe, advance him some money.

SIR PET. : What, one Charles has never had money from before ?

MOS. : Yes, Mr. Premium, of Crutched Friars, formerly a broker.

SIR PET. : Egad, Sir Oliver, a thought strikes me !—Charles, you say, does not know Mr. Premium ?

MOS. : Not at all.

SIR PET. : Now then, Sir Oliver, you may have a better opportunity of satisfying yourself than by an old romancing tale of a poor relation : go with my friend Moses, and represent Premium, and then, I'll answer for it, you'll see your nephew in all his glory.

SIR OLIV. : Egad, I like this idea better than the other, and I may visit Joseph afterwards as old Stanley.

SIR PET. : True—so you may.

ROW. : Well, this is taking Charles rather at a disadvantage, to be sure. However, Moses, you understand Sir Peter, and will be faithful ?

MOS. : You may depend upon me.—(*Looks at his watch.*) This is near the time I was to have gone.

SIR OLIV. : I'll accompany you as soon as you please, Moses—— But hold ! I have forgot one thing—how the plague shall I be able to pass for a Jew ?

MOS. : There's no need—the principal is Christian.

IR OLIV. : Is he ? I'm very sorry to hear it. But, then again, an't I rather too smartly dressed to look like a money-lender ?

IR PET. : Not at all ; 'twould not be out of character, if you went in your carriage—would it, Moses ?

Ios. : Not in the least.

IR OLIV. : Well, but how must I talk ? there's certainly some cant of usury and mode of treating that I ought to know.

IR PET. : Oh, there's not much to learn. The great point, as I take it, is to be exorbitant enough in your demands. Hey, Moses ?

Ios. : Yes, that's a very great point.

IR OLIV. : I'll answer for't I'll not be wanting in that. I'll ask him eight or ten per cent. on the loan, at least.

Ios. : If you ask him no more than that, you'll be discovered immediately.

IR OLIV. : Hey ! what, the plague ! how much then ?

Ios. : That depends upon the circumstances. If he appears not very anxious for the supply, you should require only forty or fifty per cent. ; but if you find him in great distress, and want the moneys very bad, you may ask double.

IR PET. : A good honest trade you're learning, Sir Oliver !

IR OLIV. : Truly I think so—and not unprofitable.

Ios. : Then, you know, you haven't the moneys yourself, but are forced to borrow them for him of a friend.

IR OLIV. : Oh ! I borrow it of a friend, do I ?

Ios. : And your friend is an unconscionable dog : but you can't help that.

IR OLIV. : My friend an unconscionable dog, is he ?

Ios. : Yes, and he himself has not the moneys by him, but is forced to sell stock at a great loss.

IR OLIV. : He is forced to sell stock at a great loss, is he ? Well, that's very kind of him.

IR PET. : I'faith, Sir Oliver—Mr. Premium, I mean—you'll soon be master of the trade. But, Moses ! would not you have him run out a little against the annuity bill ? That would be in character, I should think.

Ios. : Very much.

Row. : And lament that a young man now must be at years of discretion before he is suffered to ruin himself ?

Ios. : Ay, great pity !

IR PET. : And abuse the public for allowing merit to an act whose only object is to snatch misfortune and imprudence from the rapacious grip of usury, and give the minor a chance of inheriting his estate without being undone by coming into possession.

IR OLIV. : So, so—Moses shall give me further instructions as we go together.

IR PET. : You will not have much time, for your nephew lives hard by.

IR OLIV. : Oh, never fear ! my tutor appears so able, that though Charles lived in the next street, it must be my own fault if I am not a complete rogue before I turn the corner. [*Exit with* MOSES.

IR PET. : So, now, I think Sir Oliver will be convinced : you are partial. Rowley, and would have prepared Charles for the other plot.

Row. : No, upon my word, Sir Peter.

IR PETER : Well, go bring me this Snake, and I'll hear what he has to say presently. I see Maria, and want to speak with her.—(*Exit* ROWLEY.) I should be glad to be convinced my suspicions of Lady Teazle and Charles were unjust. I have never yet opened my mind on this subject to my friend Joseph—I am determined I will do it—he will give me his opinion sincerely. So, child, has Mr. Surface returned with you ?

Enter MARIA.

MAR. : No, sir ; he was engaged.

SIR PET. : Well, Maria, do you not reflect, the more you converse with that amiable young man, what return his partiality for you deserves ?

MAR. : Indeed, Sir Peter, your frequent importunity on this subject distresses me extremely—you compel me to declare, that I know no man who has ever paid me a particular attention whom I would not prefer to Mr. Surface.

SIR PET. : So—here's perverseness ! No, no, Maria, 'tis Charles only whom you would prefer. 'Tis evident his vices and follies have won your heart.

MAR. : This is unkind, sir. You know I have obeyed you in neither seeing nor corresponding with him : I have heard enough to convince me that he is unworthy my regard. Yet I cannot think it culpable, if, while my understanding severely condemns his vices, my heart suggests pity for his distresses.

SIR PET. : Well, well, pity him as much as you please ; but give your heart and hand to a worthier object.

MAR. : Never to his brother !

SIR PET. : Go, perverse and obstinate ! But take care, madam ; you have never yet known what the authority of a guardian is : don't compel me to inform you of it.

MAR. : I can only say, you shall not have just reason. 'Tis true, by my father's will, I am for a short period bound to regard you as his substitute ; but must cease to think you so, when you would compel me to be miserable. [*Exit.*

SIR PET. : Was ever man so crossed as I am, everything conspiring to fret me ! I had not been involved in matrimony a fortnight, before her father, a hale and hearty man, died, on purpose, I believe, for the pleasure of plaguing me with the care of his daughter.—(LADY TEAZLE *sings without.*) But here comes my helpmate ! She appears in great good humour. How happy I should be if I could tease her into loving me, though but a little !

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

LADY TEAZ. : Lud ! Sir Peter, I hope you haven't been quarrelling with Maria ? It is not using me well to be ill humoured when I am not by.

SIR PET. : Ah, Lady Teazle, you might have the power to make me good humoured at all times.

LADY TEAZ. : I am sure I wish I had ; for I want you to be in a charming sweet temper at this moment. Do be good humoured now, and let me have two hundred pounds, will you ?

SIR PET. : Two hundred pounds ; what, an't I to be in a good humour without paying for it ! But speak to me thus, and i'faith there's nothing I could refuse you. You shall have it ; but seal me a bond for the repayment.

LADY TEAZ. : Oh, no—there—my note of hand will do as well.

[*Offering her hand.*

SIR PET. : And you shall no longer reproach me with not giving you an independent settlement. I mean shortly to surprise you ; but shall we always live thus, hey ?

LADY TEAZ. : If you please. I'm sure I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling, provided you'll own you were tired first.

SIR PET. : Well—then let our future contest be, who shall be most obliging.

LADY TEAZ. : I assure you, Sir Peter, good nature becomes you. You look now as you did before we were married, when you used to walk with me under the elms, and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth, and chuck me under the chin, you would ; and ask me if I thought I could love an old fellow, who would deny me nothing—didn't you ?

SIR PET. : Yes, yes, and you were as kind and attentive——

LADY TEAZ. : Ay, so I was, and would always take your part, when my acquaintance used to abuse you, and turn you into ridicule.

SIR PET. : Indeed !

LADY TEAZ. : Ay, and when my cousin Sophy has called you a stiff, peevish old bachelor, and laughed at me for thinking of marrying one who might be my father, I have always defended you, and said, I didn't think you so ugly by any means, and that you'd make a very good sort of a husband.

SIR PET. : And you prophesied right ; and we shall now be the happiest couple——

LADY TEAZ. : And never differ again ?

SIR PET. : No, never—though at the same time, indeed, my dear Lady Teazle, you must watch your temper very seriously ; for in all our little quarrels, my dear, if you recollect, my love, you always began first.

LADY TEAZ. : I beg your pardon, my dear Sir Peter : indeed, you always gave the provocation.

SIR PET. : Now, see, my angel ! take care—contradicting isn't the way to keep friends.

LADY TEAZ. : Then, don't you begin it, my love !

SIR PET. : There, now ! you—you are going on. You don't perceive, my life, that you are just doing the very thing which you know always makes me angry.

LADY TEAZ. : Nay, you know if you will be angry without any reason, my dear——

SIR PET. : There ! now you want to quarrel again.

LADY TEAZ. : No, I'm sure I don't : but, if you will be so peevish——

SIR PET. : There now ! who begins first ?

LADY TEAZ. : Why, you, to be sure. I said nothing—but there's no bearing your temper.

SIR PET. : No, no, madam : the fault's in your own temper.

LADY TEAZ. : Ay, you are just what my cousin Sophy said you would be.

SIR PET. : Your cousin Sophy is a forward, impertinent gipsy.

LADY TEAZ. : You are a great bear, I am sure, to abuse my relations.

SIR PET. : Now may all the plagues of marriage be doubled on me, if ever I try to be friends with you any more !

LADY TEAZ. : So much the better.

SIR PET. : No, no, madam : 'tis evident you never cared a pin for me, and I was a madman to marry you—a pert, rural coquette, that had refused half the honest 'squires in the neighbourhood !

LADY TEAZ. : And I am sure I was a fool to marry you—an old dangling bachelor, who was single at fifty, only because he never could meet with any one who would have him.

SIR PET. : Ay, ay, madam ; but you were pleased enough to listen to me : you never had such an offer before.

LADY TEAZ. : No ! didn't I refuse Sir Tivy Terrier, who everybody said would have been a better match ? for his estate is just as good as yours, and he has broke his neck since we have been married.

SIR PET. : I have done with you, madam ! You are an unfeeling, ungrateful—but there's an end of everything. I believe you capable of everything that is bad. Yes, madam, I now believe the reports relative to you and Charles, madam. Yes, madam, you and Charles are, not without grounds——

LADY TEAZ. : Take care, Sir Peter ! you had better not insinuate any such thing ! I'll not be suspected without cause, I promise you.

SIR PET. : Very well, madam ! very well ! a separate maintenance as soon as you please. Yes, madam, or a divorce ! I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors. Let us separate, madam.

LADY TEAZ. : Agreed ! agreed ! and now, my dear Sir Peter, we are of a mind once more, we may be the happiest couple, and never differ again, you know : ha ! ha ! ha ! Well, you are going to be in a passion, I see, and I shall only interrupt you—so, bye ! bye ! [*Exit.*

SIR PET. : Plagues and tortures ! can't I make her angry either ! Oh, I am the most miserable fellow ! But I'll not bear her presuming to keep her temper : no ! she may break my heart, but she shan't keep her temper. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* CHARLES SURFACE'S *House.*

Enter TRIP, MOSES, *and* SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

TRIP : Here, Master Moses ! if you'll stay a moment, I'll try whether—what's the gentleman's name ?

SIR OLIV. : Mr. Moses, what is my name ? [*Aside to* MOSES.

MOS. : Mr. Premium.

TRIP : Premium—very well. [*Exit taking snuff.*

SIR OLIV. : To judge by the servants, one wouldn't believe the master was ruined. But what !—sure, this was my brother's house ?

MOS. : Yes, sir ; Mr. Charles bought it of Mr. Joseph, with the furniture, pictures, &c., just as the old gentleman left it. Sir Peter thought it a piece of extravagance in him.

SIR OLIV. : In my mind, the other's economy in selling it to him was more reprehensible by half.

Re-enter TRIP.

TRIP : My master says you must wait, gentlemen : he has company, and can't speak with you yet.

SIR OLIV. : If he knew who it was wanted to see him, perhaps he would not send such a message.

TRIP : Yes, yes, sir ; he knows you are here—I did not forget little Premium : no, no, no.

SIR OLIV. : Very well ; and I pray, sir, what may be your name ?

TRIP : Trip, sir ; my name is Trip, at your service.

SIR OLIV. : Well, then, Mr. Trip, you have a pleasant sort of place here, I guess ?

TRIP : Why, yes—here are three or four of us pass our time agreeably enough : but then our wages are sometimes a little in arrear—and not very great either—but fifty pounds a year, and find our own bags and bouquets.

SIR OLIV. : Bags and bouquets ! halters and bastinadoes ! [*Aside.*

TRIP : And *à propos*, Moses, have you been able to get me that little bill discounted ?

SIR OLIV. : Wants to raise money, too !—mercy on me ! Has his distresses too, I warrant, like a lord, and affects creditors and duns. [*Aside.*

MOS. : 'Twas not to be done, indeed, Mr. Trip.

TRIP : Good lack you surprise me ! My friend Brush has indorsed it, and thought when he put his name at the back of a bill 'twas the same as cash.

MOS. : No, 'twouldn't do.

TRIP : A small sum—but twenty pounds. Hark'ee, Moses, do you think you couldn't get it me by way of annuity ?

SIR OLIV. : An annuity ! ha ! ha ! a footman raise money by way of annuity ! Well done, luxury, egad ! [*Aside.*

MOS. : Well, but you must insure your place.

TRIP : Oh, with all my heart ! I'll insure my place, and my life too, if you please.

SIR OLIV. : It's more than I would your neck. [*Aside.*

MOS. : But is there nothing you could deposit ?

TRIP : Why, nothing capital of my master's wardrobe has dropped lately ; but I could give you a mortgage on some of his winter clothes, with equity of redemption before November—or you shall have the reversion of the French velvet, or a post-obit on the blue and silver ;—these, I should think, Moses, with a few pair of point ruffles, as a collateral security—hey, my little fellow ?

MOS. : Well, well. [*Bell rings.*

TRIP : Egad, I heard the bell ! I believe, gentlemen, I can now introduce you. Don't forget the annuity, little Moses ! This way, gentlemen, I'll insure my place, you know.

SIR OLIV. (*aside*) : If the man be a shadow of the master, this is the temple of dissipation indeed ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the same.*

CHARLES SURFACE, SIR HARRY BUMPER, CARELESS, *and* GENTLEMEN, *discovered drinking.*

CHAS. SURF. : 'Fore heaven, 'tis true !—there's the great degeneracy of the age. Many of our acquaintance have taste, spirit, and politeness ; but plague on't they won't drink.

CARE. : It is so, indeed, Charles ! they give in to all the substantial luxuries of the table, and abstain from nothing but wine and wit. Oh, certainly society suffers by it intolerably ! for now, instead of the social spirit of raillery that used to mantle over a glass of bright Burgundy, their conversation is become just like the Spa-water they drink, which has all the pertness and flatulency of champagne, without its spirit or flavour.

GENT. : But what are they to do who love play better than wine ?

CARE. : True ! there's Sir Harry diets himself for gaming, and is now under a hazard regimen.

CHAS. SURF. : Then he'll have the worst of it. What ! you wouldn't train a horse for the course by keeping him from corn ? For my part, egad, I'm never so successful as when I am a little merry : let me throw on a bottle of champagne, and I never lose—at least I never feel my losses, which is exactly the same thing.

GENT. : Ay, that I believe.

CHAS. SURF. : And, then, what man can pretend to be a believer in love, who is an adjurer of wine ? 'Tis the test by which the lover knows his own heart. Fill a dozen bumpers to a dozen beauties, and she that floats at the top is the maid that has bewitched you.

CARE. : Now then, Charles, be honest, and give us your real favourite.

CHAS. SURF. : Why, I have withheld her only in compassion to you. If I toast her, you must give a round of her peers, which is impossible—on earth.

CARE. : Oh, then we'll find some canonised vestals or heathen goddesses that will do, I warrant !

CHAS. SURF. : Here then, bumpers, you rogues ! bumpers ! Maria ! Maria—

SIR HAR. : Maria who ?

CHAS. SURF. : Oh, damn the surname !—'tis too formal to be registered in Love's calendar—but now, Sir Harry, beware, we must have beauty superlative.

CARE. : Nay, never study, Sir Harry : we'll stand to the toast, though your mistress should want an eye, and you know you have a song will excuse you.
SIR HAR. : Egad, so I have ! and I'll give him the song instead of the lady.
[*Sings.*

Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen ;
Here's to the widow of fifty ;
Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,
And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.

Chorus. Let the toast pass,—
Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for a glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize ;
Now to the maid who has none, sir ;
Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,
And here's to the nymph with but one, sir.

Chorus. Let the toast pass,—
Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for a glass.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow :
Now to her that's as brown as a berry :
Here's to the wife with a face full of woe,
And now to the damsel that's merry.

Chorus. Let the toast pass,—
Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for a glass.

For let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,
Young or ancient, I care not a feather ;
So fill a pint bumper quite up to the brim,
So fill up your glasses, nay, fill to the brim,
And let us e'en toast them together.

Chorus. Let the toast pass,—
Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for a glass.

ALL : Bravo ! Bravo !

Enter TRIP, *and whispers* CHARLES SURFACE.

CHAS. SURF. : Gentlemen, you must excuse me a little.—Careless, take the chair, will you ?
CARE. : Nay, pr'ythee, Charles, what now ? This is one of your peerless beauties I suppose, dropped in by chance ?
CHAS. SURF. : No, faith ! To tell you the truth, 'tis a Jew and a broker, who are come by appointment.
CARE. : Oh, damn it ! Let's have the Jew in.
1 GENT. : Ay, and the broker too, by all means.
2 GENT. : Yes, yes, the Jew and the broker.
CHAS. SURF. : Egad, with all my heart !—Trip, bid the gentlemen walk in.—(*Exit* TRIP.) Though there's one of them a stranger, I can tell you.
CARE. : Charles, let us give them some generous Burgundy, and perhaps they'll grow conscientious.

CHAS. SURF. : Oh, hang 'em, no ! wine does but draw forth a man's natural qualities ; and to make them drink would only be to whet their knavery.

Re-enter TRIP, *with* SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* MOSES.

CHAS. SURF. : So, honest Moses ; walk in, pray, Mr. Premium—that's the gentleman's name, isn't it, Moses ?

MOS. : Yes, sir.

CHAS. SURF. : Set chairs, Trip.—Sit down, Mr. Premium.—Glasses, Trip.—(TRIP *gives chairs and glasses, and exit.*) Sit down, Moses.—Come, Mr. Premium, I'll give you a sentiment ; here's *Success to usury* !—Moses, fill the gentleman a bumper.

MOS. : Success to usury ! [*Drinks.*

CARE. : Right, Moses—usury is prudence and industry, and deserves to succeed.

SIR OLIV. : Then here's—All the success it deserves ! [*Drinks.*

CARE. : No, no, that won't do ! Mr. Premium, you have demurred at the toast, and must drink it in a pint bumper.

1 GENT. : A pint bumper, at least.

MOS. : Oh, pray, sir, consider—Mr. Premium is a gentleman.

CARE. : And therefore loves good wine.

2 GENT. Give Moses a quart glass—this is mutiny, and a high contempt for the chair.

CARE. : Here, now for't ! I'll see justice done, to the last drop of my bottle.

SIR OLIV. : Nay, pray, gentlemen—I did not expect this usage.

CHAS. SURF. : No, hang it, you shan't ; Mr. Premium's a stranger.

SIR OLIV. : Odd ! I wish I was well out of their company. [*Aside.*

CARE. : Plague on 'em then ! if they won't drink, we'll not sit down with them. Come, Harry, the dice are in the next room.—Charles, you'll join us when you have finished your business with the gentlemen ?

CHAS. SURF. : I will ! I will !—(*Exeunt* SIR HARRY BUMPER *and* GENTLEMEN ; CARELESS *following.*) Careless.

CARE. (*returning*) : Well !

CHAS. SURF. : Perhaps I may want you.

CARE. : Oh, you know I am always ready : word, note, or bond, 'tis all the same to me. [*Exit.*

MOS. : Sir, this is Mr. Premium, a gentleman of the strictest honour and secrecy ; and always performs what he undertakes. Mr. Premium, this is——

CHAS. SURF. : Psha ! have done. Sir, my friend Moses is a very honest fellow, but a little slow at expression : he'll be an hour giving us our titles. Mr. Premium, the plain state of the matter is this : I am an extravagant young fellow who wants to borrow money ; you I take to be a prudent old fellow, who has got money to lend. I am blockhead enough to give fifty per cent, sooner than not have it ! and you, I presume, are rogue enough to take a hundred if you can get it. Now, sir, you see we are acquainted at once, and may proceed to business without further ceremony.

SIR OLIV. : Exceeding frank, upon my word. I see, sir, you are not a man of many compliments.

CHAS. SURF. : Oh, no, sir ! plain dealing in business I always think best.

SIR OLIV. : Sir, I like you the better for it. However, you are mistaken in one thing ; I have no money to lend, but I believe I could procure some of a friend ; but then he's an unconscionable dog. Isn't he, Moses ? And must sell stock to accommodate you. Mustn't he, Moses ?

MOS. : Yes, indeed ! You know I always speak the truth, and scorn to tell a lie !

CHAS. SURF. : Right. People that speak truth generally do. But these are trifles, Mr. Premium. What ! I know money isn't to be bought without paying for't !

SIR OLIV. : Well, but what security could you give ? You have no land, I suppose ?

CHAS. SURF. : Not a mole-hill, nor a twig, but what's in the bough-pots out of the window !

SIR OLIV. : Nor any stock, I presume ?

CHAS. SURF. : Nothing but live stock—and that's only a few pointers and ponies. But pray, Mr. Premium, are you acquainted at all with any of my connections ?

SIR OLIV. : Why, to say the truth, I am.

CHAS. SURF. : Then you must know that I have a devilish rich uncle in the East Indies, Sir Oliver Surface, from whom I have the greatest expectations ?

SIR OLIV. : That you have a wealthy uncle, I have heard ; but how your expectations will turn out is more, I believe, than you can tell.

CHAS. SURF. : Oh, no !—there can be no doubt. They tell me I'm a prodigious favourite, and that he talks of leaving me everything.

SIR OLIV. : Indeed ! this is the first I've head of it.

CHAS. SURF. : Yes, yes, 'tis just so. Moses knows 'tis true ; don't you, Moses ?

MOS. : Oh, yes ! I'll swear to't.

SIR OLIV. : Egad, they'll persuade me presently I'm at Bengal. [*Aside.*

CHAS. SURF. : Now I propose, Mr. Premium, if it's agreeable to you, a post-obit on Sir Oliver's life : though at the same time the old fellow has been so liberal to me, that I give you my word, I should be very sorry to hear that anything had happened to him.

SIR OLIV. : Not more than I should, I assure you. But the bond you mention happens to be just the worst security you could offer me—for I might live to a hundred and never see the principal.

CHAS. SURF. : Oh, yes, you would ! the moment Sir Oliver dies, you know, you would come on me for the money.

SIR OLIV. : Then I believe I should be the most unwelcome dun you ever had in your life.

CHAS. SURF. : What ! I suppose you're afraid that Sir Oliver is too good a life ?

SIR OLIV. : No, indeed I am not ; though I have heard he is as hale and healthy as any man of his years in Christendom.

CHAS. SURF. : There again, now, you are misinformed. No, no, the climate has hurt him considerably, poor uncle Oliver. Yes, yes, he breaks apace, I'm told—and is so much altered lately that his nearest relations would not know him.

SIR OLIV. : No ! Ha ! ha ! ha ! so much altered lately that his nearest relations would not know him ! Ha ! ha ! ha ! egad—ha ! ha ! ha !

CHAS. SURF. : Ha ! ha !—you're glad to hear that, little Premium ?

SIR OLIV. : No, no, I'm not.

CHAS. SURF. : Yes, yes, you are—ha ! ha ! ha !—you know that mends your chance.

SIR OLIV. : But I'm told Sir Oliver is coming over ; nay, some say he has actually arrived.

CHAS. SURF. : Psha ! sure I must know better than you whether he's come or not. No, no, rely on't he's at this moment at Calcutta. Isn't he, Moses ?

MOS. : Oh, yes, certainly.

SIR OLIV. : Very true, as you say, you must know better than I, though I have it from pretty good authority. Haven't I, Moses ?

MOS. : Yes, most undoubted !

SIR OLIV. : But, sir, as I understand you want a few hundreds immediately, is there nothing you could dispose of?

CHAS. SURF. : How do you mean?

SIR OLIV. : For instance, now, I have heard that your father left behind him a great quantity of massy old plate.

CHAS. SURF. : O Lud! that's gone long ago. Moses can tell you how better than I can.

SIR OLIV. (*aside*) : Good lack! all the family race-cups and corporation-bowls! —(*Aloud.*) Then it was also supposed that his library was one of the most valuable and compact.

CHAS. SURF. : Yes, yes, so it was—vastly too much so for a private gentleman. For my part, I was always of a communicative disposition, so I thought it a shame to keep so much knowledge to myself.

SIR OLIV. (*aside*) : Mercy upon me! learning that had run in the family like an heir-loom!—(*Aloud.*) Pray, what has become of the books?

CHAS. SURF. : You must inquire of the auctioneer, Master Premium, for I don't believe even Moses can direct you.

MOS. : I know nothing of books.

SIR OLIV. : So, so, nothing of the family property left, I suppose?

CHAS. SURF. : Not much, indeed ; unless you have a mind to the family pictures. I have got a room full of ancestors above : and if you have a taste for old paintings, egad, you shall have 'em a bargain!

SIR OLIV. : Hey! what the devil! sure, you wouldn't sell your forefathers, would you?

CHAS. SURF. : Every man of them, to the best bidder.

SIR OLIV. : What! your great-uncles and aunts?

CHAS. SURF. : Ay, and my great-grandfathers and grandmothers too.

SIR OLIV. (*aside*) : Now I give him up!—(*Aloud.*) What the plague, have you no bowels for your own kindred? Odd's life! do you take me for Shylock in the play, that you would raise money of me on your own flesh and blood?

CHAS. SURF. : Nay, my little broker, don't be angry : what need you care, if you have your money's worth?

SIR OLIV. : Well, I'll be the purchaser : I think I can dispose of the family canvas.—(*Aside.*) Oh, I'll never forgive him this! never!

Re-enter CARELESS.

CARE. : Come, Charles, what keeps you?

CHAS. SURF. : I can't come yet. I'faith, we are going to have a sale above stairs, here's little Premium will buy all my ancestors!

CARE. : Oh, burn your ancestors!

CHAS. SURF. : No, he may do that afterwards, if he pleases. Stay, Careless, we want you : egad, you shall be auctioneer—so come along with us.

CARE. : Oh, have with you, if that's the case. I can handle a hammer as well as a dice box! Going, going!

SIR OLIV. : Oh, the profligates! [*Aside.*

CHAS. SURF. : Come, Moses, you shall be appraiser, if we want one. Gad's life, little Premium, you don't seem to like the business?

SIR OLIV. : Oh, yes, I do, vastly! Ha! ha! ha! yes, yes, I think it a rare joke to sell one's family by auction—ha! ha!—(*Aside.*) Oh, the prodigal!

CHAS. SURF. : To be sure! when a man wants money, where the plague should he get assistance, if he can't make free with his own relations? [*Exeunt.*

SIR OLIV. : I'll never forgive him ; never! never!

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*A Picture Room in* CHARLES SURFACE'S *House.*

Enter CHARLES SURFACE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, MOSES, *and* CARELESS.

CHAS. SURF. : Walk in, gentlemen, pray walk in ;—here they are, the family of the Surfaces, up to the Conquest.

SIR OLIV. : And, in my opinion, a goodly collection.

CHAS. SURF. : Ay, ay, these are done in the true spirit of portrait-painting ; no *volontière grace* or expression. Not like the works of your modern Raphaels, who give you the strongest resemblance, yet contrive to make your portrait independent of you ; so that you may sink the original and not hurt the picture. No, no ; the merit of these is the inveterate likeness—all stiff and awkward as the originals, and like nothing in human nature besides.

SIR OLIV. : Ah ! we shall never see such figures of men again.

CHAS. SURF. : I hope not. Well, you see, Master Premium, what a domestic character I am ; here I sit of an evening surrounded by my family. But come, get to your pulpit, Mr. Auctioneer ; here's an old gouty chair of my grandfather's will answer the purpose.

CARE. : Ay, ay, this will do. But, Charles, I haven't a hammer ; and what's an auctioneer without his hammer ?

CHAS. SURF. : Egad, that's true. What parchment have we here ? Oh, our genealogy in full. (*Taking pedigree down.*) Here, Careless, you shall have no common bit of mahogany, here's the family tree for you, you rogue ! This shall be your hammer, and now you may knock down my ancestors with their own pedigree.

SIR OLIV. : What an unnatural rogue !—an *ex post facto* parricide ! [*Aside.*

CARE. : Yes, yes, here's a list of your generation indeed :—faith, Charles, this is the most convenient thing you could have found for the business, for 'twill not only serve as a hammer, but a catalogue into the bargain. Come, begin—A-going, a-going, a-going !

CHAS. SURF. : Bravo, Careless ! Well, here's my great uncle, Sir Richard Ravelin, a marvellous good general in his day, I assure you. He served in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and got that cut over his eye at the battle of Malplaquet. What say you, Mr. Premium ? look at him—there's a hero ! not cut out of his feathers, as your modern clipped captains are, but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general should be. What do you bid ?

SIR OLIV. (*aside to* MOSES.) : Bid him speak.

MOS. : Mr. Premium would have you speak.

CHAS. SURF. : Why, then, he shall have him for ten pounds, and I'm sure that's not dear for a staff-officer.

SIR OLIV. (*aside*) : Heaven deliver me ! his famous uncle Richard for ten pounds !—(*Aloud.*) Very well, sir, I take him at that.

CHAS. SURF. : Careless, knock down my uncle Richard.—Here, now, is a maiden sister of his, my great-aunt Deborah, done by Kneller, in his best manner, and esteemed a very formidable likeness. There she is, you see, a shepherdess feeding her flock. You shall have her for five pounds ten—the sheep are worth the money.

SIR OLIV. (*aside*) : Ah ! poor Deborah ! a woman who set such a value on herself !—(*Aloud.*) Five pounds ten—she's mine.

CHAS. SURF. : Knock down my aunt Deborah ! Here, now, are two that were a sort of cousins of theirs.—You see, Moses, these pictures were done some time ago, when beaux wore wigs, and the ladies their own hair.

Sir Oliv. : Yes, truly, head-dresses appear to have been a little lower in those days.

Chas. Surf. : Well, take that couple for the same.

Mos. : 'Tis a good bargain.

Chas. Surf. : Careless !—This, now, is a grandfather of my mother's, a learned judge, well known on the western circuit.—What do you rate him at, Moses ?

Mos. : Four guineas.

Chas. Surf. : Four guineas ! Gad's life, you don't bid me the price of his wig. —Mr. Premium, you have more respect for the woolsack ; do let us knock his lordship down at fifteen.

Sir Oliv. : By all means.

Care. : Gone !

Chas. Surf. : And there are two brothers of his, William and Walter Blunt, Esquires, both members of Parliament, and noted speakers ; and, what's very extraordinary, I believe, this is the first time they were ever bought or sold.

Sir Oliv. : That is very extraordinary, indeed ! I'll take them at your own price, for the honour of Parliament.

Care. : Well said, little Premium ! I'll knock them down at forty.

Chas. Surf. : Here's a jolly fellow—I don't know what relation, but he was mayor of Norwich : take him at eight pounds.

Sir Oliv. : No, no ; six will do for the mayor.

Chas. Surf. : Come, make it guineas, and I'll throw you the two aldermen there into the bargain.

Sir Oliv. : They're mine.

Chas. Surf. : Careless, knock down the mayor and aldermen. But, plague on't ! we shall be all day retailing in this manner ; do let us deal wholesale : what say you, little Premium ? Give me three hundred pounds for the rest of the family in the lump.

Care. : Ay, ay, that will be the best way.

Sir Oliv. : Well, well, anything to accommodate you ; they are mine. But there is one portrait which you have always passed over.

Care. : What, that ill-looking little fellow over the settee ?

Sir Oliv. : Yes, sir, I mean that ; though I don't think him so ill-looking a little fellow, by any means.

Chas. Surf. : What, that ? Oh ; that's my uncle Oliver ! 'Twas done before he went to India.

Care. : Your uncle Oliver ! Gad, then you'll never be friends, Charles. That, now, to me, is as stern a looking rogue as ever I saw ; an unforgiving eye, and a damned disinheriting countenance ! an inveterate knave, depend on't. Don't you think so, little Premium ?

Sir Oliv. : Upon my soul, sir, I do not ; I think it is as honest a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive. But I suppose uncle Oliver goes with the rest of the lumber ?

Chas. Surf. : No, hang it ! I'll not part with poor Noll. The old fellow has been very good to me, and, egad, I'll keep his picture while I've a room to put it in.

Sir Oliv. (*aside*) : The rogue's my nephew after all !—(*Aloud.*) But, sir, I have somehow taken a fancy to that picture.

Chas. Surf. : I'm sorry for't, for you certainly will not have it. Oons, haven't you got enough of them ?

Sir Oliv. (*aside*) : I forgive him everything !—(*Aloud.*) But, sir, when I take a whim in my head, I don't value money. I'll give you as much for that as for all the rest.

CHAS. SURF. : Don't tease me, master broker ; I tell you I'll not part with it, and there's an end of it.

SIR OLIV. (*aside*) : How like his father the dog is.—(*Aloud.*) Well, well, I have done.—(*Aside.*) I did not perceive it before, but I think I never saw such a striking resemblance.—(*Aloud.*) Here is a draught for your sum.

CHAS. SURF. : Why, 'tis for eight hundred pounds !

SIR OLIV. : You will not let Sir Oliver go ?

CHAS. SURF. : Zounds ! no ! I tell you, once more.

SIR OLIV. : Then never mind the difference, we'll balance that another time. But give me your hand on the bargain; you are an honest fellow, Charles—I beg pardon, sir, for being so free.—Come, Moses.

CHAS. SURF. : Egad, this is a whimsical old fellow !—But hark'ee, Premium, you'll prepare lodgings for these gentlemen.

SIR OLIV. : Yes, yes, I'll send for them in a day or two.

CHAS. SURF. : But hold ; do now send a genteel conveyance for them, for, I assure you, they were most of them used to ride in their own carriages.

SIR OLIV. : I will, I will—for all but Oliver.

CHAS. SURF. : Ay, all but the little nabob.

SIR OLIV. : You're fixed on that ?

CHAS. SURF. : Peremptorily.

SIR OLIV. (*aside*) : A dear extravagant rogue !—(*Aloud.*) Good day !—Come, Moses,—(*Aside*) Let me hear now who dares call him profligate !

[*Exit with* MOSES.

CARE. : Why, this is the oddest genius of the sort I ever met with !

CHAS. SURF. : Egad, he's the prince of brokers, I think. I wonder how the devil Moses got acquainted with so honest a fellow.—Ha ! here's Rowley.—Do, Careless, say I'll join the company in a few moments.

CARE. : I will—but don't let that old blockhead persuade you to squander any of that money on old musty debts, or any such nonsense ; for tradesmen, Charles, are the most exorbitant fellows.

CHAS. SURF. : Very true, and paying them is only encouraging them.

CARE. : Nothing else.

CHAS. SURF. : Ay, ay, never fear.—(*Exit* CARELESS.) So ! this was an odd old fellow, indeed. Let me see, two-thirds of these five hundred and thirty odd pounds are mine by right. 'Fore Heaven ! I find one's ancestors are more valuable relations than I took them for !—Ladies and gentlemen, your most obedient and very grateful servant. [*Bows ceremoniously to the pictures.*

Enter ROWLEY.

Ha ! old Rowley ! egad, you are just come in time to take leave of your old acquaintance.

ROW. : Yes, I heard they were a-going. But I wonder you can have such spirits under so many distresses.

CHAS. SURF. : Why, there's the point ! my distresses are so many, that I can't afford to part with my spirits ; but I shall be rich and splenetic, all in good time. However, I suppose you are surprised that I am not more sorrowful at parting with so many near relations ; to be sure, 'tis very affecting ; but you see they never move a muscle, so why should I ?

ROW. : There's no making you serious a moment.

CHAS. SURF. : Yes, faith, I am so now. Here, my honest Rowley, here, get me this changed directly, and take a hundred pounds of it immediately to old Stanley.

ROW. : A hundred pounds ! Consider only——

CHAS. SURF. : Gad's life, don't talk about it ! poor Stanley's wants are pressing, and, if you don't make haste, we shall have some one call that has a better right to the money.

ROW. : Ah ! there's the point ! I never will cease dunning you with the old proverb——

CHAS. SURF. : *Be just before you're generous.*—Why, so I would if I could ; but Justice is an old hobbling beldame, and I can't get her to keep pace with Generosity, for the soul of me.

ROW. : Yet, Charles, believe me, one hour's reflection——

CHAS. SURF. : Ay, ay, it's very true ; but, hark'ee, Rowley, while I have, by Heaven I'll give ; so, damn your economy ! and now for hazard. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another room in the same.*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* MOSES.

MOS. : Well, sir, I think, as Sir Peter said, you have seen Mr. Charles in high glory ; 'tis great pity he's so extravagant.

SIR OLIV. : True, but he would not sell my picture.

MOS. : And loves wine and women so much.

SIR OLIV. : But he would not sell my picture.

MOS. : And games so deep.

SIR OLIV. : But he would not sell my picture. Oh, here's Rowley.

Enter ROWLEY.

ROW. : So, Sir Oliver, I find you have made a purchase——

SIR OLIV. : Yes, yes, our young rake has parted with his ancestors like old tapestry.

ROW. : And here has he commissioned me to re-deliver you part of the purchase-money—I mean, though, in your necessitous character of old Stanley.

MOS. : Ah ! there is the pity of all : he is so damned charitable.

ROW. : And I left a hosier and two tailors in the hall, who, I'm sure, won't be paid, and this hundred would satisfy them.

SIR OLIV. : Well, well, I'll pay his debts, and his benevolence too. But now I am no more a broker, and you shall introduce me to the elder brother as old Stanley.

ROW. : Not yet awhile ; Sir Peter, I know, means to call there about this time.

Enter TRIP.

TRIP : Oh, gentlemen, I beg pardon for not showing you out ; this way—Moses, a word. [*Exit with* MOSES.

SIR OLIV. : There's a fellow for you ! Would you believe it, that puppy intercepted the Jew on our coming, and wanted to raise money before he got to his master !

ROW. : Indeed.

SIR OLIV. : Yes, they are now planning an annuity business. Ah, Master Rowley, in my days servants were content with the follies of their masters, when they were worn a little threadbare ; but now they have their vices, like their birthday clothes, with the gloss on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Library in* JOSEPH SURFACE'S *House.*

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE *and* SERVANT.

JOS. SURF. : No letter from Lady Teazle ?

SER. : No, sir.

JOS. SURF. (*aside*) : I am surprised she has not sent, if she is prevented from coming. Sir Peter certainly does not suspect me. Yet I wish I may not lose the heiress, through the scrape I have drawn myself into with the wife ; however, Charles's imprudence and bad character are great points in my favour. [*Knocking without.*

SER. : Sir, I believe that must be Lady Teazle.

JOS. SURF. : Hold ! See whether it is or not, before you go to the door : I have a particular message for you if it should be my brother.

SER. : 'Tis her ladyship, sir ; she always leaves the chair at the milliner's in the next street.

JOS. SURF. : Stay, stay : draw that screen before the window—that will do ; —my opposite neighbour is a maiden lady of so curious a temper.—(SERVANT *draws the screen, and exit.*) I have a difficult hand to play in this affair. Lady Teazle has lately suspected my views on Maria ; but she must by no means be let into that secret,—at least, till I have her more in my power.

Enter LADY TEAZLE.

LADY TEAZ. : What sentiment in soliloquy now? Have you been very impatient? O Lud ! don't pretend to look grave. I vow I couldn't come before.

JOS. SURF. : O madam, punctuality is a species of constancy very unfashionable in a lady of quality. [*Places chairs, and sits after* LADY TEAZLE *is seated.*

LADY TEAZ. : Upon my word, you ought to pity me. Do you know Sir Peter is grown so ill-natured to me of late, and so jealous of Charles too—that's the best of the story, isn't it ?

JOS. SURF. : I am glad my scandalous friends keep that up. [*Aside.*

LADY TEAZ. : I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him, and then perhaps he would be convinced ; don't you, Mr. Surface ?

JOS. SURF. (*aside*) : Indeed I do not.—(*Aloud.*) Oh, certainly I do ! for then my dear Lady Teazle would also be convinced how wrong her suspicions were of my having any design on the silly girl.

LADY TEAZ. : Well, well, I'm inclined to believe you. But isn't it provoking, to have the most ill-natured things said of one ? And there's my friend Lady Sneerwell has circulated I don't know how many scandalous tales of me, and all without any foundation, too ; that's what vexes me.

JOS. SURF. : Ay, madam, to be sure, that is the provoking circumstance—without foundation ; yes, yes, there's the mortification, indeed ; for, when a scandalous story is believed against one, there certainly is no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

LADY TEAZ. : No, to be sure, then I'd forgive their malice ; but to attack me, who am really so innocent, and who never say an ill-natured thing of anybody—that is, of any friend ; and then Sir Peter, too, to have him so peevish, and so suspicious, when I know the integrity of my own heart—indeed 'tis monstrous !

JOS. SURF. : But, my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis your own fault if you suffer it. When a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife, and withdraws his confidence from her, the original compact is broken, and she owes it the honour of her sex to endeavour to outwit him.

LADY TEAZ. : Indeed ! So that, if he suspects me without cause, it follows, that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for't ?

JOS. SURF. : Undoubtedly—for your husband should never be deceived in you : and in that case it becomes you to be frail in compliment to his discernment.

LADY TEAZ. : To be sure, what you say is very reasonable, and when the consciousness of my innocence——

Jos. Surf. : Ah, my dear madam, there is the great mistake ; 'tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it makes you negligent of forms, and careless of the world's opinion ? why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you thoughtless in your conduct, and apt to run into a thousand little imprudences ? why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you impatient of Sir Peter's temper, and outrageous at his suspicions ? why, the consciousness of your innocence.

Lady Teaz. : 'Tis very true !

Jos. Surf. : Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling *faux pas*, you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humour and agree with your husband.

Lady Teaz. : Do you think so ?

Jos. Surf. : Oh, I'm sure on't ; and then you would find all scandal would cease at once, for—in short, your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.

Lady Teaz. : So, so ; then I perceive your prescription is, that I must sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation ?

Jos. Surf. : Exactly so, upon my credit, ma'am.

Lady Teaz. : Well, certainly this is the oddest doctrine, and the newest receipt for avoiding calumny ?

Jos. Surf. : An infallible one, believe me. Prudence, like experience, must be paid for.

Lady Teaz. : Why, if my understanding were once convinced——

Jos. Surf. : Oh, certainly, madam, your understanding should be convinced. Yes, yes—Heaven forbid I should persuade you to do anything you thought wrong. No, no, I have too much honour to desire it.

Lady Teaz. : Don't you think we may as well leave honour out of the argument ? [*Rises.*

Jos. Surf. : Ah, the ill effects of your country education, I see, still remain with you.

Lady Teaz. : I doubt they do, indeed ; and I will fairly own to you, that if I could be persuaded to do wrong, it would be by Sir Peter's ill-usage sooner than your honourable logic, after all.

Jos. Surf. : Then, by this hand, which he is unworthy of—— [*Taking her hand.*

Re-enter Servant.

'Sdeath, you blockhead—what do you want ?

Ser. : I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought you would not choose Sir Peter to come up without announcing him.

Jos. Surf. : Sir Peter !—Oons—the devil.

Lady Teaz. : Sir Peter ! O Lud ! I'm ruined ! I'm ruined !

Ser. : Sir, 'twasn't I let him in.

Lady Teaz. : Oh ! I'm quite undone ! What will become of me ? Now, Mr. Logic—Oh ! mercy, sir, he's on the stairs—I'll get behind here—and if ever I'm so imprudent again—— [*Goes behind the screen.*

Jos. Surf. : Give me that book. [*Sits down.* Servant *pretends to adjust his chair.*

Enter Sir Peter Teazle.

Sir Pet. : Ay, ever improving himself. Mr. Surface, Mr. Surface—— [*Pats* Joseph *on the shoulder.*

Jos. Surf. : Oh, my dear Sir Peter, I beg your pardon. (*Gaping, throws away the book.*) I have been dozing over a stupid book. Well, I am much obliged to

you for this call. You haven't been here, I believe, since I fitted up this room. Books, you know, are the only things I am a coxcomb in.

SIR PET. : 'Tis very neat indeed. Well, well, that's proper ; and you can make even your screen a source of knowledge—hung, I perceive, with maps.

JOS. SURF. : Oh, yes, I find great use in that screen.

SIR PET. : I dare say you must, certainly, when you want to find anything in a hurry.

JOS. SURF. : Ay, or to hide anything in a hurry either. [*Aside.*

SIR PET. : Well, I have a little private business——

JOS. SURF. : You need not stay. [*To* SERVANT.

SER. : No, sir. [*Exit.*

JOS. SURF. : Here's a chair, Sir Peter—I beg——

SIR PET. : Well, now we are alone, there is a subject, my dear friend, on which I wish to unburden my mind to you—a point of the greatest moment to my peace ; in short, my good friend, Lady Teazle's conduct of late has made me very unhappy.

JOS. SURF. : Indeed ! I am very sorry to hear it.

SIR PET. : Yes, 'tis but too plain she has not the least regard for me ; but, what's worse, I have pretty good authority to suppose she has formed an attachment to another.

JOS. SURF. : Indeed ! you astonish me !

SIR PET. : Yes ! and, between ourselves, I think I've discovered the person.

JOS. SURF. : How ! you alarm me exceedingly.

SIR PET. : Ay, my dear friend, I knew you would sympathise with me !

JOS. SURF. : Yes, believe me, Sir Peter, such a discovery would hurt me just as much as it would you.

SIR PET. : I am convinced of it. Ah ! it is a happiness to have a friend whom we can trust even with one's family secrets. But have you no guess who I mean ?

JOS. SURF. : I haven't the most distant idea. It can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite !

SIR PET. : Oh, no ! What say you to Charles ?

JOS. SURF. : My brother ! impossible !

SIR PET. : Oh, my dear friend, the goodness of your own heart misleads you. You judge of others by yourself.

JOS. SURF. : Certainly, Sir Peter, the heart that is conscious of its own integrity is ever slow to credit another's treachery.

SIR PET. : True ; but your brother has no sentiment—you never hear him talk so.

JOS. SURF. : Yet I can't but think Lady Teazle herself has too much principle.

SIR PET. : Ay ; but what is principle against the flattery of a handsome, lively young fellow ?

JOS. SURF. : That's very true.

SIR PET. : And then, you know, the difference of our ages makes it very improbable that she should have any great affection for me ; and if she were to be frail, and I were to make it public, why the town would only laugh at me, the foolish old bachelor, who had married a girl.

JOS. SURF. : That's true, to be sure—they would laugh.

SIR PET. : Laugh ! ay, and make ballads, and paragraphs, and the devil knows what of me.

JOS. SURF : No, you must never make it public.

SIR PET. : But then again—that the nephew of my old friend, Sir Oliver, should be the person to attempt such a wrong, hurts me more nearly.

JOS. SURF. : Ay, there's the point. When ingratitude barbs the dart of injury, the wound has double danger in it.

SIR PET. : Ay—I, that was, in a manner, left his guardian : in whose house he had been so often entertained ; who never in my life denied him—my advice !

JOS. SURF. : Oh, 'tis not to be credited ! There may be a man capable of such baseness, to be sure ; but, for my part, till you can give me positive proofs, I cannot but doubt it. However, if it should be proved on him, he is no longer a brother of mine—I disclaim kindred with him : for the man who can break the laws of hospitality, and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as the pest of society.

SIR PET. : What a difference there is between you ! What noble sentiments !

JOS. SURF. : Yet I cannot suspect Lady Teazle's honour.

SIR PET. : I am sure I wish to think well of her, and to remove all ground of quarrel between us. She has lately reproached me more than once with having made no settlement on her ; and, in our last quarrel, she almost hinted that she should not break her heart if I was dead. Now, as we seem to differ in our ideas of expense, I have resolved she shall have her own way, and be her own mistress in that respect for the future ; and, if I were to die, she will find I have not been inattentive to her interest while living. Here, my friend, are the drafts of two deeds, which I wish to have your opinion on. By one, she will enjoy eight hundred a year independent while I live ; and, by the other, the bulk of my fortune at my death.

JOS. SURF. : This conduct, Sir Peter, is indeed truly generous.—(*Aside.*) I wish it may not corrupt my pupil.

SIR PET. : Yes, I am determined she shall have no cause to complain, though I would not have her acquainted with the latter instance of my affection yet awhile.

JOS. SURF. : Nor I, if I could help it. [*Aside.*

SIR PET. : And now, my dear friend, if you please, we will talk over the situation of your hopes with Maria.

JOS. SURF. (*softly*) : Oh, no, Sir Peter ; another time, if you please.

SIR PET. : I am sensibly chagrined at the little progress you seem to make in her affections.

JOS. SURF. (*softly*) : I beg you will not mention it. What are my disappointments when your happiness is in debate !—(*Aside.*) 'Sdeath, I shall be ruined every way !

SIR PET. : And though you are averse to my acquainting Lady Teazle with your passion, I'm sure she's not your enemy in the affair.

JOS. SURF. : Pray, Sir Peter, now oblige me. I am really too much affected by the subject we have been speaking of to bestow a thought on my own concerns. The man who is entrusted with his friend's distresses can never——

Re-enter SERVANT.

Well, sir ?

SER. : Your brother, sir, is speaking to a gentleman in the street, and says he knows you are within.

JOS. SURF. : 'Sdeath, blockhead, I'm not within—I'm out for the day.

SIR PET. : Stay—hold—a thought has struck me :—you shall be at home.

JOS. SURF. : Well, well, let him up.—(*Exit* SERVANT.) He'll interrupt Sir Peter, however. [*Aside.*

SIR PET. : Now, my good friend, oblige me, I entreat you. Before Charles comes, let me conceal myself somewhere, then do you tax him on the point we have been talking, and his answer may satisfy me at once.

JOS. SURF. : Oh, fie, Sir Peter ! would you have me join in so mean a trick ?—to trepan my brother too ?

SIR PET. : Nay, you tell me you are sure he is innocent ; if so, you do him the

greatest service by giving him an opportunity to clear himself, and you will set my heart at rest. Come, you shall not refuse me : (*going up*) here, behind the screen will be—Hey ! what the devil ! there seems to be one listener here already—I'll swear I saw a petticoat !

Jos. Surf. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! Well, this is ridiculous enough. I'll tell you, Sir Peter, though I hold a man of intrigue to be a most despicable character, yet you know, it does not follow that one is to be an absolute Joseph either ! Hark'ee. 'tis a little French milliner, a silly rogue that plagues me ; and having some character to lose, on your coming, sir, she ran behind the screen.

Sir Pet. : Ah, a rogue—— But, egad, she has overheard all I have been saying of my wife.

Jos. Surf. : Oh, 'twill never go any farther, you may depend upon it !

Sir Pet. : No ! then, faith, let her hear it out.—Here's a closet will do as well.

Jos. Surf. : Well, go in there.

Sir Pet. : Sly rogue ! sly rogue ! [*Goes into the closet.*

Jos. Surf. : A narrow escape, indeed ! and a curious situation I'm in, to part man and wife in this manner.

Lady Teaz. (*peeping*) : Couldn't I steal off ?

Jos. Surf. : Keep close, my angel !

Sir Pet. (*peeping*) : Joseph, tax him home.

Jos. Surf. : Back, my dear friend !

Lady Teaz. (*peeping*) : Couldn't you lock Sir Peter in ?

Jos. Surf. : Be still, my life !

Sir Pet. (*peeping*) : You're sure the little milliner won't blab ?

Jos. Surf. : In, in, my dear Sir Peter !—'Fore Gad, I wish I had a key to the door.

Enter Charles Surface.

Chas. Surf. : Holla ! brother, what has been the matter ? Your fellow would not let me up at first. What ! have you had a Jew or a wench with you ?

Jos. Surf. : Neither, brother, I assure you.

Chas. Surf. : But what has made Sir Peter steal off ? I thought he had been with you.

Jos. Surf. : He was, brother ; but, hearing you were coming, he did not choose to stay.

Chas. Surf. : What ! was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him !

Jos. Surf. : No, sir : but I am sorry to find, Charles, you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uneasiness.

Chas. Surf. : Yes, they tell me I do that to a great many worthy men. But how so, pray ?

Jos. Surf. : To be plain with you, brother, he thinks you are endeavouring to gain Lady Teazle's affections from him.

Chas. Surf. : Who, I ? O Lud ! not I, upon my word.—Ha ! ha ! ha ! so the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he ?—or, what is worse, Lady Teazle has found out she has an old husband ?

Jos. Surf. : This is no subject to jest on, brother. He who can laugh——

Chas. Surf. : True, true, as you were going to say—then, seriously, I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honour.

Jos. Surf. : Well, it will give Sir Peter great satisfaction to hear this. [*Raising his voice*

Chas. Surf. : To be sure, I once thought the lady seemed to have taken a fancy to me ; but, upon my soul, I never gave her the least encouragement. Besides, you know my attachment to Maria.

Jos. Surf. : But sure, brother, even if Lady Teazle had betrayed the fondest partiality for you——

Chas. Surf. : Why, look'ee, Joseph, I hope I shall never deliberately do a dishonourable action ; but if a pretty woman was purposely to throw herself in my way—and that pretty woman married to a man old enough to be her father——

Jos. Surf. : Well !

Chas. Surf. : Why, I believe I should be obliged to borrow a little of your morality, that's all. But, brother, do you know now that you surprise me exceedingly, by naming me with Lady Teazle : for i'faith, I always understood you were her favourite.

Jos. Surf. : Oh, for shame, Charles ! This retort is foolish.

Chas. Surf. : Nay, I swear I have seen you exchange such significant glances——

Jos. Surf. : Nay, nay, sir, this is no jest.

Chas. Surf. : Egad, I'm serious ! Don't you remember one day, when I called here——

Jos. Surf. : Nay, pr'ythee, Charles——

Chas. Surf. : And found you together——

Jos. Surf. : Zounds, sir, I insist——

Chas. Surf. : And another time, when your servant——

Jos. Surf. : Brother, brother, a word with you !—(*Aside.*) Gad, I must stop him.

Chas. Surf. : Informed, I say, that——

Jos. Surf. : Hush ! I beg your pardon, but Sir Peter has overheard all we have been saying. I knew you would clear yourself, or I should not have consented.

Chas. Surf. : How, Sir Peter ! Where is he ?

Jos. Surf. : Softly, there ! [*Points to the closet.*

Chas. Surf. : Oh, 'fore Heaven, I'll have him out. Sir Peter, come forth !

Jos. Surf. : No, no——

Chas. Surf. : I say, Sir Peter, come into court.—(*Pulls in* Sir Peter.) What ! my old guardian !—What !—turn inquisitor, and take evidence, incog. ? Oh, fie ! Oh, fie !

Sir Pet. : Give me your hand, Charles—I believe I have suspected you wrongfully ; but you mustn't be angry with Joseph—'twas my plan !

Chas. Surf. : Indeed !

Sir Pet. : But I acquit you. I promise you I don't think near so ill of you as I did. What I have heard has given me great satisfaction.

Chas. Surf. : Egad, then, 'twas lucky you didn't hear any more. Wasn't it, Joseph ?

Sir Pet. : Ah ! you would have retorted on him.

Chas. Surf. : Ah, ay, that was a joke.

Sir Pet. : Yes, yes, I know his honour too well.

Chas. Surf. : But you might as well have suspected him as me in this matter, for all that. Mightn't he, Joseph ?

Sir Pet. : Well, well, I believe you.

Jos. Surf. : Would they were both out of the room ! [*Aside.*

Sir Pet. : And in future, perhaps, we may not be such strangers.

Re-enter Servant *and whispers* Joseph Surface.

Ser. : Lady Sneerwell is below, and says she will come up.

Jos. Surf. : Gentlemen, I beg pardon—I must wait on you downstairs ; here's a person come on particular business.

CHAS. SURF. : Well, you can see him in another room. Sir Peter and I have not met a long time, and I have something to say to him.

JOS. SURF. (*aside*) : They must not be left together.—(*Aloud.*) I'll send Lady Sneerwell away, and return directly.—(*Aside to* SIR PETER.) Sir Peter, not a word of the French milliner.

SIR PET. (*aside to* JOSEPH SURFACE.) : I ! not for the world !—(*Exit* JOSEPH SURFACE.) Ah, Charles, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment. Well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment.

CHAS. SURF. : Psha ! he is too moral by half ; and so apprehensive of his good name, as he calls it, that I suppose he would as soon let a priest into his house as a wench.

SIR PET. : No, no,—come, come,—you wrong him. No, no, Joseph is no rake, but he is no such saint either, in that respect.—(*Aside.*) I have a great mind to tell him—we should have such a laugh at Joseph.

CHAS. SURF. : Oh, hang him ! he's a very anchorite, a young hermit !

SIR PET. : Hark'ee—you must not abuse him : he may chance to hear of it again, I promise you.

CHAS. SURF. : Why, you won't tell him ?

SIR PET. : No—but—this way.—(*Aside*). Egad, I'll tell him. (*Aloud.*) Hark'ee have you a mind to have a good laugh at Joseph ?

CHAS. SURF. : I should like it of all things.

SIR PET. : Then, i'faith we will ! I'll be quit with him for discovering me. He had a girl with him when I called. [*Whispers.*

CHAS. SURF. : What ! Joseph ? you jest.

SIR PET. : Hush !—a little French milliner—and the best of the jest is—she's in the room now.

CHAS. SURF. : The devil she is !

SIR PET. : Hush ! I tell you. [*Points to the screen.*

CHAS. SURF. : Behind the screen ! Odds life, let's unveil her !

SIR PET. : No, no, he's coming :—you shan't, indeed !

CHAS. SURF. : Oh, egad, we'll have a peep at the little milliner !

SIR PET. : Nor for the world !—Joseph will never forgive me.

CHAS. SURF. : I'll stand by you——

SIR PET. : Odds, here he is !

[CHARLES SURFACE *throws down the screen.*

Re-enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

CHAS. SURF. : Lady Teazle, by all that's wonderful !

SIR PET. : Lady Teazle, by all that's damnable !

CHAS. SURF. : Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw. Egad, you seem all to have been diverting yourselves here at hide and seek, and I don't see who is out of the secret. Shall I beg your ladyship to inform me ? Not a word !—Brother, will you be pleased to explain this matter ? What ! is Morality dumb too ?—Sir Peter, though I found you in the dark, perhaps you are not so now ! All mute ! Well—though I can make nothing of the affair, I suppose you perfectly understand one another ; so I'll leave you to yourselves.—(*Going.*) Brother, I'm sorry to find you have given that worthy man grounds for so much uneasiness.—Sir Peter ! there's nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment ! [*Exit.*

JOS. SURF. : Sir Peter—notwithstanding—I confess—that appearances are against me—if you will afford me your patience—I make no doubt—but I shall explain everything to your satisfaction.

SIR PET. : If you please, sir.

JOS. SURF. : The fact is, sir, that Lady Teazle, knowing my pretensions to your ward Maria—I say, sir, Lady Teazle, being apprehensive of the jealousy of your temper—and knowing my friendship to the family—she, sir, I say—called here—in order that—I might explain these pretensions—but on your coming—being apprehensive—as I said—of your jealousy—she withdrew—and this, you may depend on it, is the whole truth of the matter.

SIR PET. : A very clear account, upon my word ; and I dare swear the lady will vouch for every article of it.

LADY TEAZ. : For not one word of it, Sir Peter !

SIR PET. : How ! don't you think it worth while to agree in the lie ?

LADY TEAZ. : There is not one syllable of truth in what that gentleman has told you.

SIR PET. : I believe you, upon my soul, ma'am !

JOS. SURF (*aside to* LADY TEAZLE) : 'Sdeath, madam, will you betray me ?.

LADY TEAZ. : Good Mr. Hypocrite, by your leave, I'll speak for myself.

SIR PET. : Ay, let her alone, sir ; you'll find she'll make out a better story than you, without prompting.

LADY TEAZ. : Hear me, Sir Peter !—I came here on no matter relating to your ward, and even ignorant of this gentleman's pretensions to her. But I came, seduced by his insidious arguments, at least to listen to his pretended passion, if not to sacrifice your honour to his baseness.

SIR PET. : Now, I believe, the truth is coming, indeed !

JOS. SURF. : The woman's mad !

LADY TEAZ. : No, sir ; she has recovered her senses, and your own arts have furnished her with the means.—Sir Peter, I do not expect you to credit me—but the tenderness you expressed for me, when I am sure you could not think I was a witness to it, has penetrated so to my heart, that had I left the place without the shame of this discovery, my future life should have spoken the sincerity of my gratitude. As for that smooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend, while he affected honourable addresses to his ward—I behold him now in a light so truly despicable, that I shall never again respect myself for having listened to him. [*Exit.*

JOS. SURF. : Notwithstanding all this, Sir Peter, Heaven knows——

SIR PET. : That you are a villain ! and so I leave you to your conscience.

JOS. SURF. : You are too rash, Sir Peter ; you shall hear me. The man who shuts out conviction by refusing to——

[*Exeunt* SIR PETER *and* JOSEPH SURFACE, *talking.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—*The Library in* JOSEPH SURFACE'S *House.*

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE *and* SERVANT.

JOS. SURF. : Mr. Stanley ! and why should you think I would see him ? you must know he comes to ask something.

SER. : Sir, I should not have let him in, but that Mr. Rowley came to the door with him.

JOS. SURF. : Psha ! blockhead ! to suppose that I should now be in a temper to receive visits from poor relations !—Well, why don't you show the fellow up ?

SER. : I will, sir.—Why, sir, it was not my fault that Sir Peter discovered my lady——

JOS. SURF. : Go, fool !—(*Exit* SERVANT.) Sure Fortune never played a man of my policy such a trick before ! My character with Sir Peter, my hopes with

Maria, destroyed in a moment! I'm in a rare humour to listen to other people's distresses! I shan't be able to bestow even a benevolent sentiment on Stanley.—So! here he comes, and Rowley with him. I must try to recover myself, and put a little charity into my face, however. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE *and* ROWLEY.

SIR OLIV. : What! does he avoid us? That was he, was it not?

ROW. : It was, sir. But I doubt you are come a little too abruptly. His nerves are so weak, that the sight of a poor relation may be too much for him. I should have gone first to break it to him.

SIR OLIV. : Oh, plague of his nerves! Yet this is he whom Sir Peter extols as a man of the most benevolent way of thinking!

ROW. : As to his way of thinking, I cannot pretend to decide; for, to do him justice, he appears to have as much speculative benevolence as any private gentleman in the kingdom, though he is seldom so sensual as to indulge himself in the exercise of it.

SIR. OLIV. : Yet he has a string of charitable sentiments at his fingers' ends.

ROW. : Or, rather, at his tongue's end, Sir Oliver; for I believe there is no sentiment he has such faith in as that *Charity begins at home.*

SIR OLIV. : And his, I presume, is of that domestic sort which never stirs abroad at all.

ROW. : I doubt you'll find it so;—but he's coming. I mustn't seem to interrupt you; and you know, immediately as you leave him, I come in to announce your arrival in your real character.

SIR OLIV. : True; and afterwards you'll meet me at Sir Peter's.

ROW. : Without losing a moment. [*Exit.*

SIR OLIV. : I don't like the complaisance of his features.

Re-enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

JOS. SURF. : Sir, I beg you ten thousand pardons for keeping you a moment waiting.—Mr. Stanley, I presume.

SIR OLIV. : At your service.

JOS. SURF. : Sir, I beg you will do me the honour to sit down—I entreat you, sir.

SIR OLIV. : Dear sir—there's no occasion.—(*Aside.*) Too civil by half!

JOS. SURF. : I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Mr. Stanley; but I am extremely happy to see you look so well. You were nearly related to my mother, I think, Mr. Stanley?

SIR OLIV. : I was, sir; so nearly that my present poverty, I fear, may do discredit to her wealthy children, else I should not have presumed to trouble you.

JOS. SURF. : Dear sir, there needs no apology: he that is in distress, though a stranger, has a right to claim kindred with the wealthy. I am sure I wish I was one of that class, and had it in my power to offer you even a small relief.

SIR OLIV. : If your uncle, Sir Oliver, were here, I should have a friend.

JOS. SURF. : I wish he was, sir, with all my heart: you should not want an advocate with him, believe me, sir.

SIR OLIV. : I should not need one—my distresses would recommend me. But I imagined his bounty would enable you to become the agent of his charity.

JOS. SURF. : My dear sir, you were strangely misinformed. Sir Oliver is a worthy man, a very worthy man; but avarice, Mr. Stanley, is the vice of age. I will tell you, my good sir, in confidence, what he has done for me has been a mere nothing; though people, I know, have thought otherwise, and, for my part, I never chose to contradict the report.

SIR OLIV. : What! has he never transmitted you bullion—rupees—pagodas?

Jos. Surf. : Oh, dear sir, nothing of the kind ! No, no ; a few presents now and then—china, shawls, congou tea, avadavats, and Indian crackers—little more, believe me.

Sir Oliv. : Here's gratitude for twelve thousand pounds !—Avadavats and Indian crackers ! [*Aside.*

Jos. Surf. : Then, my dear sir, you have heard, I doubt not, of the extravagance of my brother ; there are very few would credit what I have done for that unfortunate young man.

Sir Oliv. : Not I, for one ! [*Aside.*

Jos. Surf. : The sums I have lent him ! Indeed I have been exceedingly to blame ; it was an amiable weakness ; however, I don't pretend to defend it—and now I feel it doubly culpable, since it has deprived me of the pleasure of serving you, Mr. Stanley, as my heart dictates.

Sir Oliv. (*aside*) : Dissembler !—(*Aloud.*) Then, sir, you can't assist me ?

Jos. Surf. : At present, it grieves me to say, I cannot ; but, whenever I have the ability, you may depend upon hearing from me.

Sir Oliv. : I am extremely sorry——

Jos. Surf. : Not more than I, believe me ; to pity, without the power to relieve, is still more painful than to ask and be denied.

Sir Oliv. : Kind sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Jos. Surf. : You leave me deeply affected, Mr. Stanley.—William, be ready to open the door. [*Calls to* Servant.

Sir Oliv. : O, dear sir, no ceremony.

Jos. Surf. : Your very obedient.

Sir Oliv. : Your most obsequious.

Jos. Surf. : You may depend upon hearing from me, whenever I can be of service.

Sir Oliv. : Sweet sir, you are too good.

Jos. Surf. : In the meantime I wish you health and spirits.

Sir Oliv. : Your ever grateful and perpetual humble servant.

Jos. Surf. : Sir, yours as sincerely.

Sir Oliv. : Charles !—you are my heir. [*Exit.*

Jos. Surf. : This is one bad effect of a good character ; it invites application from the unfortunate, and there needs no small degree of address to gain the reputation of benevolence without incurring the expense. The silver ore of pure charity is an expensive article in the catalogue of a man's good qualities ; whereas the sentimental French plate I use instead of it makes just as good a show, and pays no tax.

Re-enter Rowley.

Row. : Mr. Surface, your servant : I was apprehensive of interrupting you, though my business demands immediate attention, as this note will inform you.

Jos. Surf. : Always happy to see Mr. Rowley.—(*Aside. Reads the letter.*) Sir Oliver Surface !—My uncle arrived !

Row. : He is, indeed : we have just parted—quite well, after a speedy voyage, and impatient to embrace his worthy nephew.

Jos. Surf. : I am astonished !—William ! stop Mr. Stanley, if he's not gone. [*Calls to* Servant.

Row. : Oh ! he's out of reach, I believe.

Jos. Surf. : Why did you not let me know this when you came in together ?

Row. : I thought you had particular business. But I must be gone to inform your brother, and appoint him here to meet your uncle. He will be with you in a quarter of an hour.

JOS. SURF. : So he says. Well, I am strangely overjoyed at his coming.—(*Aside.*) Never, to be sure, was anything so damned unlucky !

ROW. : You will be delighted to see how well he looks.

JOS. SURF. : Oh ! I'm overjoyed to hear it.—(*Aside.*)—Just at this time !

ROW. : I'll tell him how impatiently you expect him.

JOS. SURF. : Do, do ; pray give my best duty and affection. Indeed, I cannot express the sensations I feel at the thought of seeing him.—(*Exit* ROWLEY.) Certainly his coming just at this time is the cruellest piece of ill fortune. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* SIR PETER TEAZLE'S *House.*

Enter MRS. CANDOUR *and* MAID.

MAID : Indeed, ma'am, my lady will see nobody at present.

MRS. CAN. : Did you tell her it was her friend Mrs. Candour ?

MAID : Yes, ma'am ; but she begs you will excuse her.

MRS. CAN. : Do go again ; I shall be glad to see her, if it be only for a moment, for I am sure she must be in great distress.—(*Exit* MAID.) Dear heart, how provoking ! I'm not mistress of half the circumstances ! We shall have the whole affair in the newspapers, with the names of the parties at length, before I have dropped the story at a dozen houses.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

Oh, dear Sir Benjamin ! you have heard, I suppose——

SIR BEN. : Of Lady Teazle and Mr. Surface——

MRS. CAN. : And Sir Peter's discovery——

SIR BEN. : Oh, the strangest piece of business, to be sure !

MRS. CAN. : Well, I never was so surprised in my life. I am so sorry for all parties, indeed.

SIR BEN. : Now, I don't pity Sir Peter at all : he was so extravagantly partial to Mr. Surface.

MRS. CAN. : Mr. Surface ! Why, 'twas with Charles Lady Teazle was detected.

SIR BEN. : No, no, I tell you : Mr. Surface is the gallant.

MRS. CAN. : No such thing ! Charles is the man. 'Twas Mr. Surface brought Sir Peter on purpose to discover them.

SIR BEN. : I tell you I had it from one——

MRS. CAN. : And I have it from one——

SIR BEN. : Who had it from one, who had it——

MRS. CAN. : From one immediately—— But here comes Lady Sneerwell ; perhaps she knows the whole affair.

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

LADY SNEER. : So, my dear Mrs. Candour, here's a sad affair of our friend Lady Teazle !

MRS. CAN. : Ay, my dear friend, who would have thought——

LADY SNEER. : Well, there is no trusting to appearances ; though indeed, she was always too lively for me.

MRS. CAN. : To be sure, her manners were a little too free ; but then she was so young !

LADY SNEER. : And had, indeed, some good qualities.

MRS. CAN. : So she had, indeed. But have you heard the particulars ?

LADY SNEER. : No ; but everybody says that Mr. Surface——

SIR BEN. : Ay, there ; I told you Mr. Surface was the man.

MRS. CAN. : No, no : indeed the assignation was with Charles.

LADY SNEER. : With Charles ! You alarm me, Mrs. Candour.

MRS. CAN. : Yes, yes : he was the lover. Mr. Surface, to do him justice, was only the informer.

SIR BEN. : Well, I'll not dispute with you, Mrs. Candour ; but, be it which it may, I hope that Sir Peter's wound will not——

MRS. CAN. : Sir Peter's wound ! Oh, mercy ! I didn't hear a word of their fighting.

LADY SNEER. : Nor I, a syllable.

SIR BEN. : No ! what, no mention of the duel ?

MRS. CAN. : Not a word.

SIR BEN. : Oh, yes : they fought before they left the room.

LADY SNEER. : Pray let us hear.

MRS. CAN. : Ay, do oblige us with the duel.

SIR BEN. : "*Sir*," says Sir Peter, immediately after the discovery, "*you are a most ungrateful fellow.*"

MRS. CAN. : Ay, to Charles——

SIR BEN. : No, no—to Mr. Surface—"*a most ungrateful fellow ; and old as I am, sir*," says he, "*I insist on immediate satisfaction.*"

MRS. CAN. : Ay, that must have been to Charles ; for 'tis very unlikely Mr. Surface should fight in his own house.

SIR BEN. : 'Gad's life, ma'am, not at all—"*giving me immediate satisfaction.*"—On this, ma'am, Lady Teazle, seeing Sir Peter in such danger, ran out of the room in strong hysterics, and Charles after her, calling out for hartshorn and water ; then, madam, they began to fight with swords——

Enter CRABTREE.

CRAB. : With pistols, nephew—pistols ! I have it from undoubted authority.

MRS. CAN. : Oh, Mr. Crabtree, then it is all true !

CRAB. : Too true, indeed, madam, and Sir Peter is dangerously wounded——

SIR BEN. : By a thrust in second quite through his left side——

CRAB. : By a bullet lodged in the thorax.

MRS. CAN. : Mercy on me ! Poor Sir Peter !

CRAB. : Yes, madam ; though Charles would have avoided the matter, if he could.

MRS. CAN. : I knew Charles was the person.

SIR BEN. : My uncle, I see, knows nothing of the matter.

CRAB. : But Sir Peter taxed him with the basest ingratitude——

SIR BEN. : That I told you, you know——

CRAB. : Do, nephew, let me speak !—and insisted on immediate——

SIR BEN. : Just as I said——

CRAB. : Odds life, nephew, allow others to know something too ! A pair of pistols lay on the bureau (for Mr. Surface, it seems, had come home the night before late from Salthill, where he had been to see the Montem with a friend, who has a son at Eton), so, unluckily, the pistols were left charged.

SIR BEN. : I heard nothing of this.

CRAB. : Sir Peter forced Charles to take one, and they fired, it seems, pretty nearly together. Charles's shot took effect, as I tell you, and Sir Peter's missed ; but, what is very extraordinary, the ball struck against a little bronze Shakspeare that stood over the fireplace, grazed out of the window at a right angle, and wounded the postman, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire.

SIR BEN. : My uncle's account is more circumstantial, I confess ; but I believe mine is the true one, for all that.

LADY SNEER. (*aside*) : I am more interested in this affair than they imagine, and must have better information. [*Exit.*

SIR BEN. : Ah ! Lady Sneerwell's alarm is very easily accounted for.

CRAB. : Yes, yes, they certainly do say—but that's neither here nor there.

MRS. CAN. : But, pray, where is Sir Peter at present ?

CRAB. : Oh ! they brought him home, and he is now in the house, though the servants are ordered to deny him.

MRS. CAN. : I believe so, and Lady Teazle, I suppose, attending him.

CRAB. : Yes, yes ; and I saw one of the faculty enter just before me.

SIR BEN. : Hey ! who comes here ?

CRAB. : Oh, this is he : the physician, depend on't.

MRS. CAN. : Oh, certainly ! it must be the physician ; and now we shall know.

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

CRAB. : Well, doctor, what hopes ?

MRS. CAN. : Ay, doctor, how's your patient ?

SIR BEN. : Now, doctor, isn't it a wound with a small-sword ?

CRAB. : A bullet lodged in the thorax, for a hundred !

SIR OLIV. : Doctor ! a wound with a small-sword ! and a bullet in the thorax ? —Oons ! are you mad, good people ?

SIR BEN. : Perhaps, sir, you are not a doctor ?

SIR OLIV. : Truly, I am to thank you for my degree, if I am.

CRAB. : Only a friend of Sir Peter's, then, I presume. But, sir, you must have heard of his accident ?

SIR OLIV. : Not a word !

CRAB. : Not of his being dangerously wounded ?

SIR OLIV. : The devil he is !

SIR BEN. : Run through the body——

CRAB. : Shot in the breast——

SIR BEN. : By one, Mr. Surface——

CRAB. : Ay, the younger.

SIR OLIV. : Hey ! what the plague ! you seem to differ strangely in your accounts : however, you agree that Sir Peter is dangerously wounded.

SIR BEN. : Oh, yes, we agree in that.

CRAB. : Yes, yes, I believe there can be no doubt in that.

SIR OLIV. : Then, upon my word, for a person in that situation, he is the most imprudent man alive ; for here he comes, walking as if nothing at all was the matter.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE.

Odds heart, Sir Peter ! you are come in good time, I promise you ; for we had just given you over !

SIR BEN. (*aside to* CRABTREE) : Egad, uncle, this is the most sudden recovery !

SIR OLIV. : Why, man ! what do you do out of bed with a small-sword through your body, and a bullet lodged in your thorax ?

SIR PET. : A small-sword and a bullet ?

SIR OLIV. : Ay ; these gentlemen would have killed you without law or physic, and wanted to dub me a doctor to make me an accomplice.

SIR PET. : Why, what is all this ?

SIR BEN. : We rejoice, Sir Peter, that the story of the duel is not true, and are sincerely sorry for your other misfortune.

SIR PET. : So, so ; all over the town already. [*Aside.*

CRAB. : Though, Sir Peter, you were certainly vastly to blame to marry at your years.

SIR PET. : Sir, what business is that of yours ?

MRS. CAN. : Though, indeed, as Sir Peter made so good a husband, he's very much to be pitied.

SIR PET. : Plague on your pity, ma'am ! I desire none of it.

SIR BEN. : However, Sir Peter, you must not mind the laughing and jests you will meet with on the occasion.

SIR PET. : Sir, sir ! I desire to be master in my own house.

CRAB. : 'Tis no uncommon case, that's one comfort.

SIR PET. : I insist on being left to myself : without ceremony, I insist on your leaving my house directly !

MRS. CAN. : Well, well, we are going ; and depend on't, we'll make the best report of it we can. [*Exit.*

SIR PET. : Leave my house !

CRAB. : And tell how hardly you've been treated. [*Exit.*

SIR PET. : Leave my house !

SIR BEN. : And how patiently you bear it. [*Exit.*

SIR PET. : Fiends ! vipers ! furies ! Oh ! that their own venom would choke them !

SIR OLIV. : They are very provoking indeed, Sir Peter.

Enter ROWLEY.

ROW. : I heard high words : what has ruffled you, sir ?

SIR PET. : Psha ! what signifies asking ? Do I ever pass a day without my vexations ?

ROW. : Well, I'm not inquisitive.

SIR OLIV. : Well, Sir Peter, I have seen both my nephews in the manner we proposed.

SIR PET. : A precious couple they are !

ROW. : Yes, and Sir Oliver is convinced that your judgment was right, Sir Peter.

SIR OLIV. : Yes, I find Joseph is indeed the man, after all.

ROW. : Ay, as Sir Peter says, he is a man of sentiment.

SIR OLIV. : And acts up to the sentiments he professes.

ROW. : It certainly is edification to hear him talk.

SIR OLIV. : Oh, he's a model for the young men of the age ! But how's this, Sir Peter ? you don't join us in your friend Joseph's praise, as I expected.

SIR PET. : Sir Oliver, we live in a damned wicked world, and the fewer we praise the better.

ROW. : What ! do you say so, Sir Peter, who were never mistaken in your life ?

SIR PET. : Psha ! plague on you both ! I see by your sneering you have heard the whole affair. I shall go mad among you !

ROW. : Then, to fret you no longer, Sir Peter, we are indeed acquainted with it all. I met Lady Teazle coming from Mr. Surface's so humbled, that she deigned to request me to be her advocate with you.

SIR PET. : And does Sir Oliver know all this ?

SIR OLIV. : Every circumstance.

SIR PET. : What, of the closet and the screen, hey ?

SIR OLIV. : Yes, yes, and the little French milliner. Oh, I have been vastly diverted with the story ! ha ! ha ! ha !

SIR PET. : 'Twas very pleasant.

SIR OLIV. : I never laughed more in my life, I assure you : ha ! ha ! ha !

SIR PET. : Oh, vastly diverting ! ha ! ha ! ha !

ROW. : To be sure, Joseph with his sentiments ! ha ! ha ! ha !

SIR PET. : Yes, his sentiments ! ha ! ha ! ha ! Hypocritical villain !

SIR OLIV. : Ay, and that rogue Charles to pull Sir Peter out of the closet : ha ! ha ! ha !

SIR PET. : Ha ! ha ! 'twas devilish entertaining, to be sure !

SIR OLIV. : Ha ! ha ! ha ! Egad, Sir Peter, I should like to have seen your face when the screen was thrown down ; ha ! ha !

SIR PET. : Yes, my face when the screen was thrown down : ha ! ha ! ha ! Oh, I must never show my head again !

SIR OLIV. : But come, come, it isn't fair to laugh at you neither, my old friend ; though, upon my soul, I can't help it.

SIR PET. : Oh, pray don't restrain your mirth on my account : it does not hurt me at all ! I laugh at the whole affair myself. Yes, yes, I think being a standing jest for all one's acquaintance a very happy situation. Oh, yes, and then of a morning to read the paragraphs about Mr. S——, Lady T——, and Sir P——, will be so entertaining !

ROW. : Without affectation, Sir Peter, you may despise the ridicule of fools. But I see Lady Teazle going towards the next room ; I am sure you must desire a reconciliation as earnestly as she does.

SIR OLIV. : Perhaps my being here prevents her coming to you. Well, I'll leave honest Rowley to mediate between you ; but he must bring you all presently to Mr. Surface's, where I am now returning, if not to reclaim a libertine, at least to expose hypocrisy.

SIR PET. : Ah, I'll be present at your discovering yourself there with all my heart ; though 'tis a vile unlucky place for discoveries.

ROW. : We'll follow. [*Exit* SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

SIR PET. : She is not coming here, you see, Rowley.

ROW. : No, but she has left the door of that room open, you perceive. See, she is in tears.

SIR PET. : Certainly a little mortification appears very becoming in a wife. Don't you think it will do her good to let her pine a little ?

ROW. : Oh, this is ungenerous in you !

SIR PET. : Well, I know not what to think. You remember the letter I found of hers evidently intended for Charles !

ROW. : A mere forgery, Sir Peter ! laid in your way on purpose. This is one of the points which I intend Snake shall give you conviction of.

SIR PET. : I wish I were once satisfied of that. She looks this way. What a remarkably elegant turn of the head she has. Rowley, I'll go to her.

ROW. : Certainly.

SIR PET. : Though, when it is known that we are reconciled, people will laugh at me ten times more.

ROW. : Let them laugh, and retort their malice only by showing them you are happy in spite of it.

SIR PET. : I'faith, so I will ! and, if I'm not mistaken, we may yet be the happiest couple in the country.

ROW. : Nay, Sir Peter, he who once lays aside suspicion——

SIR PET. : Hold, Master Rowley ! if you have any regard for me, never let me hear you utter anything like a sentiment : I have had enough of them to serve me the rest of my life. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Library in* JOSEPH SURFACE'S *House.*

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE *and* LADY SNEERWELL.

LADY SNEER. : Impossible ! Will not Sir Peter immediately be reconciled to Charles, and of course no longer oppose his union with Maria ? The thought is distraction to me.

JOS. SURF. : Can passion furnish a remedy ?

LADY SNEER. : No, nor cunning either. Oh, I was a fool, an idiot, to league with such a blunderer !

JOS. SURF. : Surely, Lady Sneerwell, I am the greatest sufferer ; yet you see I bear the accident with calmness.

LADY SNEER. : Because the disappointment doesn't reach your heart ; your interest only attached you to Maria. Had you felt for her what I have for that ungrateful libertine, neither your temper nor hypocrisy could prevent your showing the sharpness of your vexation.

JOS. SURF. : But why should your reproaches fall on me for this disappointment ?

LADY SNEER. : Are you not the cause of it ? Had you not a sufficient field for your roguery in imposing upon Sir Peter, and supplanting your brother, but you must endeavour to seduce his wife ? I hate such an avarice of crimes ; 'tis an unfair monopoly, and never prospers.

JOS. SURF. : Well, I admit I have been to blame. I confess I deviated from the direct road of wrong, but I don't think we're so totally defeated either.

LADY SNEER. : No !

JOS. SURF. : You tell me you have made a trial of Snake since we met, and that you still believe him faithful to us ?

LADY SNEER. : I do believe so.

JOS. SURF. : And that he has undertaken, should it be necessary, to swear and prove, that Charles is at this time contracted by vows and honour to your ladyship, which some of his former letters to you will serve to support ?

LADY SNEER. : This, indeed, might have assisted.

JOS. SURF. : Come, come ; it is not too late yet.—(*Knocking at the door.*) But hark ! this is probably my uncle, Sir Oliver : retire to that room ; we'll consult further when he's gone.

LADY SNEER. : Well, but if he should find you out too.

JOS. SURF. : Oh, I have no fear of that. Sir Peter will hold his tongue for his own credit's sake—and you may depend on it I shall soon discover Sir Oliver's weak side !

LADY SNEER. : I have no diffidence of your abilities ! only be constant to one roguery at a time.

JOS. SURF. : I will, I will !—(*Exit* LADY SNEERWELL.) So ! 'tis confounded hard, after such bad fortune, to be baited by one's confederate in evil. Well, at all events, my character is so much better than Charles's, that I certainly—hey ! —what—this is not Sir Oliver, but old Stanley again. Plague on't that he should return to tease me just now ! I shall have Sir Oliver come and find him here—and——

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

Gad's life, Mr. Stanley, why have you come back to plague me at this time ? You must not stay now, upon my word.

SIR OLIV. : Sir, I hear your uncle Oliver is expected here, and though he has been so penurious to you, I'll try what he'll do for me.

JOS. SURF. : Sir, 'tis impossible for you to stay now, so I must beg——Come any other time, and I promise you, you shall be assisted.

SIR OLIV. : No : Sir Oliver and I must be acquainted.

JOS. SURF. : Zounds, sir ! then I insist on your quitting the room directly.

SIR OLIV. : Nay, sir——

JOS. SURF. : Sir, I insist on't !—Here, William ! show this gentleman out. Since you compel me, sir, not one moment—this is such insolence.

[*Going to push him out.*

Enter CHARLES SURFACE.

CHAS. SURF. : Heyday ! what's the matter now? What the devil, have you got hold of my little broker here ? Zounds, brother, don't hurt little Premium. What's the matter, my little fellow ?

JOS. SURF. : So ! he has been with you, too, has he ?

CHAS. SURF. : To be sure he has. Why, he's as honest a little—— But sure, Joseph, you have not been borrowing money too, have you ?

JOS. SURF. : Borrowing ! no ! But, brother, you know we expect Sir Oliver here every——

CHAS. SURF. : O Gad, that's true ! Noll mustn't find the little broker here, to be sure.

JOS. SURF. : Yet, Mr. Stanley insists——

CHAS. SURF. : Stanley ! why his name's Premium.

JOS. SURF. : No, sir, Stanley.

CHAS. SURF. : No, no, Premium.

JOS. SURF. : Well, no matter which—but——

CHAS. SURF. : Ay, ay, Stanley or Premium, 'tis the same thing, as you say ; for I suppose he goes by half a hundred names, besides A. B. at the coffee-house.

[*Knocking.*

JOS. SURF. : 'Sdeath ! here's Sir Oliver at the door. Now I beg, Mr. Stanley——

CHAS. SURF. : Ay, ay, and I beg, Mr. Premium——

SIR OLIV. : Gentlemen——

JOS. SURF. : Sir, by heaven you shall go !

CHAS. SURF. : Ay, out with him, certainly.

SIR OLIV. : This violence——

JOS. SURF. : Sir, 'tis your own fault.

CHAS. SURF. : Out with him, to be sure. [*Both forcing* SIR OLIVER *out.*

Enter SIR PETER *and* LADY TEAZLE, MARIA, *and* ROWLEY.

SIR PET. : My old friend, Sir Oliver—hey ! What in the name of wonder !—here are dutiful nephews—assault their uncle at his first visit !

LADY TEAZ. : Indeed, Sir Oliver, 'twas well we came in to rescue you.

ROW. : Truly it was ; for I perceive, Sir Oliver, the character of old Stanley was no protection to you.

SIR OLIV. : Nor of Premium either : the necessities of the former could not extort a shilling from that benevolent gentleman ; and with the other I stood a chance of faring worse than my ancestors, and being knocked down without being bid for.

JOS. SURF. : Charles !

CHAS. SURF. : Joseph !

JOS. SURF. : 'Tis now complete !

CHAS. SURF. : Very.

SIR OLIV. : Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley too—look on that elder nephew of mine. You know what he has already received from my bounty ; and you also know how gladly I would have regarded half my fortune as held in trust for him ? judge, then, my disappointment in discovering him to be destitute of truth, charity, and gratitude !

SIR PET. : Sir Oliver, I should be more surprised at this declaration, if I had not myself found him to be mean, treacherous, and hypocritcal.

LADY TEAZ. : And if the gentleman pleads not guilty to these, pray let him call me to his character.

SIR PET. : Then, I believe, we need add no more : if he knows himself, he will consider it as the most perfect punishment that he is known to the world.

CHAS. SURF. : If they talk this way to Honesty, what will they say to me, by-and-by ? [*Aside.*

[SIR PETER, LADY TEAZLE, *and* MARIA *retire.*

SIR OLIV. : As for that prodigal, his brother, there——

CHAS. SURF. : Ay, now comes my turn : the damned family pictures will ruin me ! [*Aside.*

JOS. SURF. : Sir Oliver—uncle, will you honour me with a hearing.

CHAS. SURF. : Now, if Joseph would make one of his long speeches, I might recollect myself a little. [*Aside.*

SIR OLIV. : I suppose you would undertake to justify yourself ?

[*To* JOSEPH SURFACE.

JOS. SURF. : I trust I could.

SIR OLIV. (*to* CHARLES SURFACE) : Well, sir !—and you could justify yourself too, I suppose ?

CHAS. SURF. : Not that I know of, Sir Oliver.

SIR OLIV. : What !—Little Premium has been let too much into the secret, I suppose ?

CHAS. SURF. : True, sir ; but they were family secrets, and should not be mentioned again, you know.

ROW. : Come, Sir Oliver, I know you cannot speak of Charles's follies with anger.

SIR OLIV. : Odd's heart, no more I can ; nor with gravity either. Sir Peter, do you know the rogue bargained with me for all his ancestors ; sold me judges and generals by the foot, and maiden aunts as cheap as broken china.

CHAS. SURF. : To be sure, Sir Oliver, I did make a little free with the family canvas, that's the truth on't. My ancestors may rise in judgment against me, there's no denying it ; but believe me sincere when I tell you—and upon my soul I would not say so if I was not—that if I do not appear mortified at the exposure of my follies, it is because I feel at this moment the warmest satisfaction at seeing you, my liberal benefactor.

SIR OLIV. : Charles, I believe you. Give me your hand again : the ill-looking little fellow over the settee has made your peace.

CHAS. SURF. : Then, sir, my gratitude to the original is still increased.

LADY TEAZ. (*advancing*) : Yet, I believe, Sir Oliver, here is one whom Charles is still more anxious to be reconciled to. [*Pointing to* MARIA.

SIR OLIV. : Oh, I have heard of his attachment there ; and, with the young lady's pardon, if I construe right—that blush——

SIR PET. : Well, child, speak your sentiment.

MAR. : Sir, I have little to say, but that I shall rejoice to hear that he is happy ; for me, whatever claim I had to his attention, I willingly resign to one who has a better title.

CHAS. SURF. : How, Maria !

SIR PET. : Heyday ! what's the mystery now ? While he appeared an incorrigible rake, you would give your hand to no one else ; and now that he is likely to reform I'll warrant you won't have him.

MAR. : His own heart and Lady Sneerwell know the cause.

CHAS. SURF. : Lady Sneerwell !

JOS. SURF. : Brother, it is with great concern I am obliged to speak on this point, but my regard to justice compels me, and Lady Sneerwell's injuries can no longer be concealed. [*Opens the door.*

Enter LADY SNEERWELL.

SIR PET. : So ! another French milliner ! Egad, he has one in every room in the house, I suppose !

LADY SNEER. : Ungrateful Charles ! Well may you be surprised, and feel for the indelicate situation your perfidy has forced me into.

CHAS. SURF. : Pray, uncle, is this another plot of yours ? For, as I have life, I don't understand it.

JOS. SURF. : I believe, sir, there is but the evidence of one person more necessary to make it extremely clear.

SIR PET. : And that person, I imagine, is Mr. Snake.—Rowley, you were perfectly right to bring him with us, and pray let him appear.

ROW. : Walk in, Mr. Snake.

Enter SNAKE.

I thought his testimony might be wanted ; however, it happens unluckily, that he comes to confront Lady Sneerwell, not to support her.

LADY SNEER. : A villain ! Treacherous to me at last ! Speak, fellow, have you too conspired against me ?

SNAKE : I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons : you paid me extremely liberally for the lie in question ; but I unfortunately have been offered double to speak the truth.

LADY SNEER. : The torments of shame and disappointment on you all ! [*Going.*

LADY TEAZ. : Hold, Lady Sneerwell—before you go, let me thank you for the trouble you and that gentleman have taken, in writing letters from me to Charles, and answering them yourself ; and let me also request you to make my respects to the scandalous college, of which you are president, and inform them, that Lady Teazle, licentiate, begs leave to return the diploma they granted her, as she leaves off practice, and kills characters no longer.

LADY SNEER. : You too, madam !—provoking—insolent ! May your husband live these fifty years ! [*Exit.*

SIR PET. : Oons ! what a fury !

LADY TEAZ. : A malicious creature, indeed !

SIR PET. : What ! not for her last wish ?

LADY TEAZ. : Oh, no !

SIR OLIV. : Well, sir, and what have you to say now ?

JOS. SURF. : Sir, I am so confounded, to find that Lady Sneerwell could be guilty of suborning Mr. Snake in this manner, to impose on us all, that I know not what to say : however, lest her revengeful spirit should prompt her to injure my brother, I had certainly better follow her directly. [*Exit.*

SIR PET. : Moral to the last drop !

SIR OLIV. : Ay, and marry her, Joseph, if you can. Oil and vinegar !—egad, you'll do very well together.

ROW. : I believe we have no more occasion for Mr. Snake at present ?

SNAKE : Before I go, I beg pardon once for all, for whatever uneasiness I have been the humble instrument of causing to the parties present.

SIR PET. : Well, well, you have made atonement by a good deed at last.

SNAKE : But I must request of the company, that it shall never be known.

SIR PET. : Hey ! what the plague ! are you ashamed of having done a right thing once in your life ?

SNAKE : Ah, sir, consider—I live by the badness of my character ; and, if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world.

SIR OLIV. : Well, well—we'll not traduce you by saying anything in your praise, never fear. [*Exit* SNAKE.

SIR PET. : There's a precious rogue !

LADY TEAZ. : See, Sir Oliver, there needs no persuasion now to reconcile your nephew and Maria.

SIR OLIV. : Ay, ay, that's as it should be, and, egad, we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

CHAS. SURF. : Thank you, dear uncle.

SIR PET. : What, you rogue ! don't you ask the girl's consent first ?

CHAS. SURF. : Oh, I have done that a long time—a minute ago—and she has looked yes.

MAR. : For shame, Charles !—I protest, Sir Peter, there has not been a word——

SIR OLIV. : Well, then, the fewer the better : may your love for each other never know abatement.

SIR PET. : And may you live as happily together as Lady Teazle and I intend to do !

CHAS. SURF. : Rowley, my old friend, I am sure you congratulate me ; and I suspect that I owe you much.

SIR OLIV. : You do, indeed, Charles.

ROW. : If my efforts to serve you had not succeeded you would have been in my debt for the attempt—but deserve to be happy—and you over-repay me.

SIR PET. : Ay, honest Rowley always said you would reform.

CHAS. SURF. : Why as to reforming, Sir Peter, I'll make no promises, and that I take to be a proof that I intend to set about it. But here shall be my monitor —my gentle guide.—Ah ! can I leave the virtuous path those eyes illumine ?

Though thou, dear maid, shouldst wave thy beauty's sway,
Thou still must rule, because I will obey :
An humble fugitive from Folly view,
No sanctuary near but Love and you : [*To the audience.*
You can, indeed, each anxious fear remove,
For even Scandal dies, if you approve. [*Exeunt omnes.*

1865

SOCIETY

(By THOMAS ROBERTSON)

The interval that followed *The School for Scandal* was longer than the interval that preceded *She Stoops to Conquer*. Some would complain that we are still waiting for the next great play. More would agree that Bernard Shaw has inaugurated an era at least as great as any that has gone before. This volume is concerned with the pre-Shavian drama. It is fitting to remember the aspirations of some nineteenth-century reformers temporarily eclipsed by the lustre of those who were privileged to enter the Promised Land.

The first effectual wave of the reform movement—for the movement progressed by waves—was provided by Thomas Robertson (1829–1871), who

approached the problem of the drama's plight without any high falutin' notions about National Literature and Art. He was content to begin at the beginning. He tried to make plays true to nature. It was the real beginning of the end of the slump.

Society was the first shot in the campaign. It was "tried out" in Liverpool on the 8th May, 1865, and, in November of the same year, was produced at the Prince of Wales Theatre, off Tottenham Court Road, with Bancroft as Sidney Daryl, Marie Wilton (later Lady Bancroft) as Maud Hetherington, and John Hare as Lord Ptarmigant. Between the two productions, Robertson lost a wife beside whom, for nine years, he had struggled to keep the pot boiling. With the London production, he arrived. *Ours* followed, then *Caste*, and, in quick succession (among others), *Play*, *Home*, *School*, *Progress*, finally in January 1871, *War*—the only failure of the series. Robertson was played out, and died a fortnight later.

Does this play "date"? A West End manager would have no doubts in the matter. Let us say that it "dates" charmingly. The scene in the "Owl's Roost" (drawn from the life of the old Arundel Club), and the love scene in a West End Square do not startle us as they startled our great-grandparents. But, for playgoers or readers who are not too clever, they are still fresh as well as fragrant.

The play is reproduced with the abbreviated stage directions that accompanied all printed plays in Robertson's time. It would seem a sort of sacrilege to put our pen through them. Or, shall we say, it is due to our author to be a little sentimental about him.

SOCIETY

A Comedy in Three Acts

Characters

Lord Ptarmigant	Mac Usquebaugh	Doddles
Lord Cloudwrays, M.P.	Doctor Makvicz	Moses Aaron (*a Bailiff*)
Sidney Daryl (*a Barrister*)	Bradley	Sheridan Trodnon
Mr. John Chodd, Sen.	Scargil	Lady Ptarmigant
Mr. John Chodd, Jun.	Sam Stunner, P.R. (*alias the Smiffel Lamb*)	Maud Hetherington
Tom Stylus	Shamheart	Little Maud
O'Sullivan		Mrs. Churton

Servant

ACT I

Scene First.—*Sidney Daryl's Chambers, in Lincoln's Inn; set door piece R. and set door piece L. (to double up and draw off); the room to present the appearance of belonging to a sporting literary barrister; books, pictures, whips, the mirror stuck full of cards (painted on cloth); a table on R., chairs, &c.*

As the curtain rises a knock heard, and Doddles *discovered opening door, L.*

Tom (*without*) : Mr. Daryl in?
Dodd. : Not up yet.

Enter Tom Stylus, Chodd, Jun., *and* Chodd, Sen.

Chodd, Jun. (*L., looking at watch*) : Ten minutes to twelve, eh, guv?
Tom. (*R.C.*) : Late into bed; up after he oughter; out for brandy and sobering water.
Sidney (*within*) : Doddles.

DODD. (*R., an old clerk*) : Yes, sir !
SIDNEY : Brandy and soda.
DODD. : Yes, sir !
TOM. : I said so ! Tell Mr. Daryl two gentlemen wish to see him on particular business.
CHODD, JUN. (*a supercilious bad swell—glass in eye, hooked stick—vulgar and uneasy*) : So this is an author's crib—is it ?—don't think much of it, eh, guv ? (*crossing behind to L.C.*)
CHODD, SEN. (*a common old man, with a dialect*) : Seems comfortable enough to me, Johnny.
CHODD, JUN. : Don't call me Johnny ?—I hope he won't be long ! (*looking at watch*) Don't seem to me the right sort of thing ; for two gentlemen to be kept waiting for a man they are going to employ.
CHODD, SEN. : Gently, Johnny. (CHODD, JUN., *looks annoyed*) I mean gently without the Johnny.—Mister——
TOM : Daryl—Sidney Daryl !
CHODD, SEN. : Daryl didn't know as we was coming !
CHODD, JUN (*rudely to* TOM) : Why didn't you let him know ?
TOM (*fiercely*) : How the devil could I ?—I didn't see you till last night. (CHODD, JUN., *retires into himself*) You'll find Sidney Daryl just the man for you ; young—full of talent—what I was thirty years ago ;—I'm old now, and not full of talent, if ever I was ; I've emptied myself ;—I've missed my tip. You see I wasn't a swell—he is !
CHODD, JUN. : A swell—what a man who writes for his living ?

DODDLES *enters, door R.*

DODD. : Mr. Daryl will be with you directly ; will you please to sit down ?
[CHODD, SEN., *sits L.C.*, TOM *takes a chair L., of table ;* CHODD, JUN., *waits to have one given to him, is annoyed that no one does so, and sits on table*—DODDLES *goes round to L.*
CHODD, JUN. : Where is Mr. Daryl ?
DODD. : In his bath !
CHODD, JUN. (*jumping off table*) : What ! you don't mean to say he keeps us here while he's washing himself ?

Enter SIDNEY DARYL *in morning jacket, door R.*

SIDNEY : Sorry to have detained you ; how are you, Tom ?
[TOM *and* CHODD, SEN., *rise*, CHODD, JUN., *sits again on table and sucks cane.*
CHODD, SEN. : Not at all !
CHODD, JUN. (*with watch*) : Fifteen minutes.
SIDNEY (*crossing, C., handing chair to* CHODD, JUN.) : Take a chair !
CHODD, JUN. : This'll do.
SIDNEY : But you're sitting on the steel pens.
TOM : Dangerous things ! pens. [CHODD, JUN., *takes a chair L.*
SIDNEY : Yes ! loaded with ink, percussion powder's nothing to 'em.
CHODD, JUN. : We came here to talk business. (*to* DODDLES) Here, you get out !
SIDNEY (*surprised*) : Doddles—I expect a lot of people this morning, be kind enough to take them into the library.
DODD. (*L.*) : Yes, sir ! (*aside looking at* CHODD, JUN.) Young rhinoceros !
[*Exit door, L.*
SIDNEY : Now, gentlemen, I am—(*crossing behind table to R.*)

TOM (*L. of table*) : Then I'll begin,—first let me introduce Mr. Sidney Daryl, to Mr. John Chodd of Snoggerston, also to Mr. John Chodd, Jun., of the same place ; Mr. John Chodd of Snoggerston is very rich ;—he made a fortune by——

CHODD, SEN. : No !—my brother Joe made the fortune in Australey, by gold digging and then spec'lating ; which he then died, and left all to me.

CHODD, JUN. (*aside*) : Guv ! cut it !

CHODD, SEN. : I shan't,—I ain't ashamed of what I was, nor what I am ;—it never was my way. Well, sir, I have lots of brass !

SIDNEY : Brass ?

CHODD, SEN. : Money ?

CHODD, JUN. : Heaps !

CHODD, SEN (*L.C.*) : Heaps ; but having begun by being a poor man, without edication, and not being a gentleman——

CHODD, JUN (*aside*) : Guv !—cut it.

CHODD, SEN. : I shan't—I know I'm not, and I'm proud of it, that is proud of knowing I'm not, and I won't pretend to be. Johnny, don't put me out—I say I'm not a gentleman, but my son is.

SIDNEY (*looking at him*) : Evidently.

CHODD, SEN. : And I wish him to cut a figure in the world—to get into Parliament.

SIDNEY : Very difficult.

CHODD, SEN. : To get a wife ?

SIDNEY : Very easy.

CHODD, SEN. : And in short, to be a—a real gentleman.

SIDNEY : Very difficult.

CHODD, SEN. : }
CHODD, JUN. : } Eh ?

SIDNEY : I mean very easy.

CHODD, SEN. : Now, as I'm anxious he should be an M.P. as soon as——

SIDNEY : As he can.

CHODD, SEN. : Just so, and as I have lots of capital unemployed, I mean to invest it in——

TOM (*slapping* SIDNEY *on knees*) : A new daily paper ?

SIDNEY : By Jove !

CHODD, SEN. : A cheap daily paper, that could—that will—What will a cheap daily paper do ?

SIDNEY : Bring the " Court Circular " within the knowledge of the humblest.

TOM : Educate the masses—raise them morally, socially, politically scientifically, geologically, and horizontally.

CHODD, SEN. (*delighted*) : That's it—that's it, only it looks better in print.

TOM (*spouting*) : Bring the glad and solemn tidings of the day to the labourer at his plough—the spinner at his wheel—the swart forger at his furnace—the sailor, on the giddy mast—the lighthouse keeper, as he trims his beacon lamp—the housewife, at her paste-board—the mother at her needle—the lowly lucifer seller, as he plashes his wet and weary way through the damp, steaming, stony streets, eh ?—you know (*slapping* SIDNEY DARYL *on the knee—they both laugh*).

CHODD, SEN. (*to* CHODD, JUN.) : What are they a laughing at ?

TOM : So my old friend, Johnny Prothero, who lives hard by Mr. Chodd, knowing that I have started lots of papers, sent the two Mr. Chodds, or the Messrs. Chodd—which is it ? you're a great grammarian—to me. I can find them an efficient staff, and you are the first man we've called upon.

SIDNEY : Thanks, old fellow. When do you propose to start it ?
CHODD, SEN. : At once.
SIDNEY : What is it to be called ?
CHODD, SEN. : We don't know.
CHODD, JUN. : We leave that to the fellows we pay for their time and trouble.
SIDNEY : You want something——
CHODD, SEN. : Strong.
TOM : And sensational.
SIDNEY : I have it (*rising*).
TOM : }
CHODD, SEN. : } What ?
CHODD, JUN. : }
SIDNEY (*rising*) : The " Morning Earthquake ! "
TOM (*rising*) : Capital !
CHODD, SEN. (*rising*) : First rate !
CHODD, JUN. (*still seated*) : Not so bad. (*goes up during next speech*)
SIDNEY : Don't you see ? In place of the clock, a mass of houses—factories, and palaces, tumbling one over the other ; and then the prospectus ! " At a time when thrones are tottering, dynasties dissolving—while the old world is displacing to make room for the new "——
TOM : Bravo !
CHODD, SEN. (*enthusiastically*) : Hurray !
TOM : A second edition at 4 o'clock, p.m. The " Evening Earthquake," eh ? Placard the walls. " The Earthquake," one note of admiration ; " The Earthquake," two notes of admiration ; " The Earthquake," three notes of admiration. Posters : " 'The Earthquake ' delivered every morning with your hot rolls." " With coffee, toast, and eggs, enjoy your ' Earthquake ! ' "
CHODD, SEN. (*with pocket book*) : I've got your name and address.
CHODD, JUN. (*who has been looking at cards stuck in glass, C.*) Guv. (*takes old* CHODD *up and whispers to him*)
TOM (*to* SIDNEY) : Don't like this young man !
SIDNEY : No.
TOM : Cub.
SIDNEY : Cad.
TOM : Never mind. The old un's not a bad 'un. We're off to a printer's.
SIDNEY : Good bye, Tom, and thank ye.
TOM. : How's the little girl ?
SIDNEY : Quite well. I expect her here this morning.
CHODD, SEN. : Good morning. [*Exeunt* CHODD, SEN., *and* TOM, *door L.*
SIDNEY (*filling pipe, &c.*) : Have a pipe ?
CHODD, JUN. (*taking out a magnificent case*) : I always smoke cigars.
SIDNEY : Gracious creature ! Have some bitter beer ? (*getting it from locker*)
CHODD, Jun. : I never drink anything in the morning.
SIDNEY : Oh !
CHODD, JUN. : But champagne.
SIDNEY : I haven't got any.
CHODD, JUN. (*L.*) : Then I'll take beer. (*they sit*) Business is business—so I'd best begin at once. The present age is as you are aware—a practical age. I come to the point—it's my way. Capital commands the world. The capitalist commands capital, therefore the capitalist commands the world.
SIDNEY (*R.*) : But you don't quite command the world, do you ?
CHODD, JUN. : Practically, I do. I wish for the highest honours—I bring out my cheque book. I want to get into the House of Commons—cheque book. I want the best legal opinion in the House of Lords—cheque book. The best

house—cheque book. The best turn out—cheque book. The best friends, the best wife, the best trained children—cheque book, cheque book, and cheque book.

SIDNEY : You mean to say with money you can purchase anything ?

CHODD, JUN. : Exactly. This life is a matter of bargain.

SIDNEY : But " honour, love, obedience, troops of friends."

CHODD, JUN. : Can buy 'em all, sir, in lots as at an auction.

SIDNEY : Love, too ?

CHODD, JUN. : Marriage means a union mutually advantageous. It is a civil contract like a partnership.

SIDNEY : And the old-fashioned virtues of honour and chivalry ?

CHODD, JUN. : Honour means not being a bankrupt, I know nothing at all about chivalry, and I don't want to.

SIDNEY : Well, yours is quite a new creed to me, and I confess I don't like it.

CHODD, JUN. : The currency, sir, converts the most hardened sceptic. I see by the cards on your glass that you go out a good deal.

SIDNEY : Go out ?

CHODD, JUN. : Yes, to parties. (*looking at cards on table*) There's my Lady this, and the Countess t'other, and Mrs. somebody else. Now that's what I want to do.

SIDNEY : Go into society ?

CHODD, JUN. : Just so. You had money once, hadn't you ?

SIDNEY : Yes.

CHODD, JUN. : What did you do with it ?

SIDNEY : Spent it.

CHODD, JUN. : And you've been in the army ?

SIDNEY : Yes.

CHODD, JUN. : Infantry ?

SIDNEY : Cavalry.

CHODD, JUN. : Dragoons ?

SIDNEY : Lancers.

CHODD, JUN. : How did you get out of it ?

SIDNEY : Sold out.

CHODD, JUN. : Then you were a first-rate fellow, till you tumbled down ?

SIDNEY : Tumbled down !

CHODD, JUN. : Yes, to what you are.

[SIDNEY *about to speak, is interrupted by* MOSES AARON, *without, L.*

MOSES : Tell you I mush't shee him.

Enter MOSES AARON *with* DODDLES, *door L.*

MOSES (*not seeing* CHODD, *going round behind table*) : Sorry, Mister Daryl, but at the shoot of Brackersby and Co. (*arrests him*)

CHODD, JUN : Je-hosophat ! (*rising*)

SIDNEY : Confound Mr. Brackersby ! It hasn't been owing fifteen months !—How much ?

MOSES : With exes, fifty-four pun' two.

SIDNEY : I've got it in the next room. Have some beer.

MOSES : Thank ye, shir. (SIDNEY *pours it out*)

SIDNEY : Back directly. [*Exit, door, L.*

CHODD, Jun. (*L.*) : This chap's in debt. Here you !

MOSES (*R.*) : Shir.

CHODD, JUN. : Mr. Daryl—does he owe much ?

MOSES : Spheck he does, shir, or I shouldn't know him.

CHODD, JUN. : Here's half-a-sov. Give me your address ?

MOSES (*gives card*) : " Orders executed with punctuality and dispatch."
CHODD, JUN. : If I don't get into society now, I'm a Dutchman.

Enter SIDNEY, *R.*

SIDNEY : Here you are—ten fives—two two's—and a half-a-crown for yourself.
MOSES : Thank ye, shir. Good mornin', shir.
SIDNEY : Good morning.
MOSES (*to* CHODD) : Good mornin', shir.
CHODD, JUN. : Such familiarity from the lower orders.
[*Exit* MOSES AARON, *door, L.*
You take it coolly (*sitting L. of table*)
SIDNEY (*sitting*) : I generally do.
CHODD, JUN. (*looking round*) : You've got lots of guns ?
SIDNEY : I'm fond of shooting.
CHODD, JUN. : And rods ?
SIDNEY : I'm fond of fishing.
CHODD, JUN. : And books ?
SIDNEY : I like reading.
CHODD, JUN. : And whips ?
SIDNEY : And riding.
CHODD, JUN. : Why you seem fond of everything ?
SIDNEY (*looking at him*) : No ; not everything.

DODDLES *enters, at door, L., with card.*

SIDNEY (*reading*) : " Mr. Sam. Stunner, P.R."
CHODD, JUN. : " P.R." What's P.R. mean ? Afternoon's P.M.
SIDNEY : Ask him in. [*Exit* DODDLES.
CHODD, JUN. : Is he an author ? or does P.R. mean Pre-Raphaelite ?
SIDNEY : No ; he's a prize-fighter—the Smiffel Lamb.

Enter the SMIFFEL LAMB, *L. door.*

How are you, Lamb ?
LAMB : Bleating, sir, bleating—thankee kindly.
CHODD, JUN. (*aside to* SIDNEY) : Do prize fighters usually carry cards ?
SIDNEY : The march of intellect. Education of the masses—the Jemmy Masseys. Have a glass of sherry ?
LAMB : Not a drain, thankee, sir.
CHODD, JUN. (*aside*) : Offers that brute sherry, and makes me drink beer.
LAMB : I've jist bin drinkin' with Lankey Joe, and the Dulwich Duffer, at Sam Shoulderblows. I'm a going into trainin' next week to fight Australian Harry, the Boundin' Kangaroo. I shall lick him, sir. I know I shall.
SIDNEY : I shall back you, Lamb.
LAMB : Thankee, Mr. Daryl. I knew you would. I always does my best for my backers, and to keep up the honour of the science ; the Fancy, sir, should keep square. (*looks at* CHODD, *hesitates, then walks to door, closes it and walks sharply up to* SIDNEY DARYL—CHODD *leaping up in alarm, and retiring to back—leaning on table and speaking close to* SIDNEY DARYL'S *ear*) I jist called in to give you the office, sir, as has always bin so kind to me, not to *put* any tin on the mill between the Choking Chummy and Slang's Novice. It's a cross, sir, a reg'lar barney !
SIDNEY : Is it ? thank ye.
LAMB : That's wot I called for, sir ; and now I'm hoff. (*goes to door—turning*) Don't *putt* a mag on it, sir : Choking Chummy's a cove, as would sell his own mother ; he once sold *me*, which is *wuss*. Good day, sir. [*Exit* LAMB, *door, L.*

CHODD *reseats himself.*

CHODD, JUN. : As I was saying, you know lots of people at clubs, and in society.
SIDNEY : Yes.
CHODD, JUN. : Titles, and Honorables, and Captains, and that.
SIDNEY : Yes.
CHODD, JUN. : Tiptoppers. (*after a pause*) You're not well off?
SIDNEY (*getting serious*) : No.
CHODD, JUN. : I am. I've heaps of brass. Now I have what you haven't, and I haven't what you have. You've got what I want, and I've got what you want. That's logic, isn't it?
SIDNEY (*gravely*) : What of it?
CHODD, JUN. : This : suppose we exchange or barter. You help me to get into the company of men with titles, and women with titles ; swells, you know, real uns, and all that.
SIDNEY : Yes.
CHODD, JUN. : And I'll write you a cheque for any reasonable sum you like to name.

SIDNEY *rises indignantly, at the same moment* LITTLE MAUD *and* MRS. CHURTON *enter door, L.*

L. MAUD (*running to* SIDNEY) : Here I am, uncle ; Mrs. Churton says I've been such a good girl.
SIDNEY (*kissing her*) : My darling. How d'ye do, Mrs. Churton. I've got a waggon and a baa lamb that squeaks, for you. (*to* LITTLE MAUD—*then to* CHODD, JUN.) Mr. Chodd, I cannot entertain your very commercial proposition. My friends, are my friends ; they are not marketable commodities. I regret that I can be of no assistance to you. With your appearance, manners, and cheque book, you are sure to make a circle of your own.
CHODD, JUN. : You refuse, then——
SIDNEY : Absolutely. Good morning.
CHODD, JUN. : Good morning. (*aside*) And if I don't have my knife into you, my name's not John Chodd, Jun.
[*Exeunt* SIDNEY, LITTLE MAUD *and* MRS. CHURTON, *door, R.*—CHODD, *door, L.*

SCENE SECOND.—*The Interior of a Square at the West-end. Weeping ash over a rustic chair, C., trees, shrubs, walks, rails, gates, &c. ;—houses at back—time evening—effect of setting sun in windows of houses—lights in some of the windows, &c.,—street lamps.*

MAUD *discovered in rustic chair reading ; street band heard playing in the distance.*
MAUD : I can't see to read any more. Heigho ! how lonely it is ! and that band makes me so melancholy :—sometimes music makes me feel—(*rising*) Heigho ! I suppose I shall see nobody to-night ; I must go home. (*starts*) Oh ! (SIDNEY *appears at L. gate*) I think I can see to read a few more lines. (*sits again, and takes book*)
SIDNEY (*feeling pockets*) : Confound it ! I've left the key at home. (*tries gate*) How shall I get in ! (*looking over rails*) I'll try the other. (*goes round at back to opposite gate*)
MAUD : Why, he's going ! He doesn't know I'm here. (*rises, calling*) Sid—No I won't, the idea of his—(*sees* SIDNEY *at gate, R.*) Ah ! (*gives a sigh of relief, reseats herself and reads*).
SIDNEY (*at gate, R.*) : Shut too ! (*trying gate*) provoking ! what shall I—(*sees* NURSEMAID *approaching with* CHILD *from L. 1 E.,—drops his hat into square*) Will you kindly open this ? I've forgotten my key. (GIRL *opens gate*) Thanks ! (*he enters square ;* GIRL *and* CHILD *go out at gate ;*—LIFE GUARDSMAN *enters,*

R. U. E., speaks to GIRL, *they exeunt, L. U. E.*—SIDNEY *sighs on seeing* MAUD) There she is ! (*seats himself by* MAUD) Maud !

MAUD (*L., starting*) : Oh ! is that you ? who would have thought of seeing you here !

SIDNEY (*R.*) : Oh, come—don't I know that you walk here after dinner ? and all day long I've been wishing it was half-past eight.

MAUD (*coquetting*) : I wonder, now, how often you've said that, this last week.

SIDNEY : Don't pretend to doubt me, that's unworthy of you. (*a pause*) Maud !

MAUD : Yes.

SIDNEY : Are you not going to speak ?

MAUD (*dreamily*) : I don't know what to say.

SIDNEY : That's just my case. When I'm away from you, I feel I could talk to you for hours ; and when I'm with you, somehow or other, it seems all to go away. (*getting closer to her, and taking her hand*) It is such happiness to be with you, that it makes me forget everything else. (*takes off his gloves and puts them on seat*) Ever since I was that high, in the jolly old days down at Springmead, my greatest pleasure has been to be near you. (*looks at watch*) Twenty to nine. When must you return ?

MAUD : At nine.

SIDNEY : Twenty minutes. How's your aunt ?

MAUD : As cross as ever.

SIDNEY : And Lord Ptarmigant ?

MAUD : As usual—asleep.

SIDNEY : Dear old man ! how he does doze his time away. (*another pause*) Anything else to tell me ?

MAUD : We had such a stupid dinner ; such odd people.

SIDNEY : Who ?

MAUD : Two men of the name of Chodd.

SIDNEY (*uneasily*) : Chodd !

MAUD : Isn't it a funny name ?—Chodd.

SIDNEY : Yes, it's a Chodd name—I mean an odd name. Where were they picked up ?

MAUD : I don't know. Aunty says they are both very rich.

SIDNEY (*uneasily*) : She thinks of nothing but money. (*looks at watch*) Fifteen to nine. (*stage has grown gradually dark*) Maud ?

MAUD (*in a whisper*) : Yes.

SIDNEY : If I were rich—if you were rich—if we were rich ?

MAUD : Sidney ! (*drawing closer to him*)

SIDNEY : As it is, I almost feel it's a crime to love you.

MAUD : Oh, Sidney !

SIDNEY : You who might make such a splendid marriage.

MAUD : If you had—money—I couldn't care for you any more than I do now.

SIDNEY : My darling ! (*looks at watch*) Ten minutes. I know you wouldn't. Sometimes I feel mad about you—mad when I know you are out and smiling upon others—and—and waltzing.

MAUD : I can't help waltzing when I'm asked.

SIDNEY : No, dear, no ; but when I fancy you are spinning round with another's arm about your waist. (*his arm round her waist*) Oh !—I feel——

MAUD : Why, Sidney. (*smiling*) You are jealous ?

SIDNEY : Yes, I am.

MAUD : Can't you trust me ?

SIDNEY : Implicitly. But I like to be with you all the same.

MAUD (*whispering*) : So do I with you.

SIDNEY : My love ! (*kisses her, and looks at watch*) : Five minutes.

MAUD : Time to go ?

SIDNEY : No ! (MAUD, *in taking out her handkerchief, takes out a knot of ribbon*) What's that ?

MAUD : Some trimmings I'm making for our fancy fair.

SIDNEY : What colour is it. Scarlet ?

MAUD : Magenta.

SIDNEY : Give it to me ?

MAUD : What nonsense.

SIDNEY : Won't you ?

MAUD : I've brought something else.

SIDNEY : For me ?

MAUD : Yes.

SIDNEY : What ?

MAUD : These. (*producing small case, which* SIDNEY *opens*)

SIDNEY : Sleeve links !

MAUD : Now, which will you have, the links or the ribbon ?

SIDNEY (*after reflection*) : Both.

MAUD : You avaricious creature !

SIDNEY (*putting the ribbons near his heart*) : It's not in the power of words to tell you how I love you. Do you care for me enough to trust your future with me ? Will you be mine ?

MAUD : Sidney !

SIDNEY : Mine, and none other's ; no matter how brilliant the offer—how dazzling the position.

MAUD (*in a whisper—leaning towards him*) : Yours and yours only ! (*clock strikes nine*)

SIDNEY (*with watch*) : Nine ! Why doesn't time stop, and big Ben refuse to toll the hour ? (LADY *and* LORD PTARMIGANT *appear and open gate, R.*)

MAUD (*frightened*) : My aunt ! (SIDNEY *gets to back, round L. of square*—LORD *and* LADY PTARMIGANT *advance*)

LADY P. (*a very grand acid old lady*) : Maud !

MAUD : Aunty, I was just coming away.

LADY P. : No one in the Square ? Quite improper to be here alone, Ferdinand !

LORD P. (*a little old gentleman*) : My love ?

LADY P. : What is the time ?

LORD P. : Don't know—watch stopped—tired of going I suppose, like me.

LADY P. (*sitting on chair—throws down the gloves left by* SIDNEY *with her dress*) : What's that ? (*picking them up*) Gloves ?

MAUD (*frightened*) : Mine, aunty !

LADY P. : Yours ? You've got yours on ! (*looking at them*) These are Sidney Daryl's. I know his size—seven-and-a-half. I see why you are so fond of walking in the square ; for shame ! (*turning to* SIDNEY, *who has just got the R. gate open, and is going out.*) Sidney ! (*fiercely*) I see you ! There is no occasion to try and sneak away. Come here. (SIDNEY *advances. With ironical politeness*) You have left your gloves. (*all are standing except* LORD PTARMIGANT, *who lies at full length on chair and goes to sleep*)

SIDNEY (*confused*) : Thank you, Lady Ptarm——

LADY P. : You two fools have been making love. I've long suspected it. I'm shocked with both of you ; a penniless scribbler, and a dependant orphan, without a shilling or an expectation. Do you (*to* SIDNEY) wish to drag my niece, born and bred a lady, to a back parlour, and bread and cheese ? Or do you (*to* MAUD) wish to marry a shabby writer, who can neither feed himself nor you ? I can leave you nothing, for I am as well bred a pauper as yourselves. (*to* MAUD) To keep appointments in a public square ! your

conduct is disgraceful—worse—it is unladylike ; and yours (*to* SIDNEY), is dishonorable, and unworthy, to fill the head of a foolish girl, with sentiment and rubbish. (*loudly*) Ferdinand.

LORD P. (*waking up*) : Yes, dear.

LADY P. : Do keep awake : the Chodds will be here directly ; they are to walk home with us, and I request you to make yourself agreeable to them.

LORD P. : Such canaille.

LADY P. : Such cash !

LORD P. : Such cads.

LADY P. : Such cash ! Pray Ferdinand, don't argue. (*authoritatively*)

LORD P. : I never do. (*goes to sleep again*)

LADY P. : I wish for no *esclandre*. Let us have no discussion in the square. Mr. Daryl, I shall be sorry if you compel me to forbid you my house. I have other views for Miss Hetherington. (SIDNEY *bows*)

The two CHODDS *in evening dress appear at gate, R.—they enter.*

LADY P. : My dear Mr. Chodd, Maud has been so impatient. (*the* CHODDS *do not see* SIDNEY—*to* CHODD, SEN.) I shall take your arm, Mr. Chodd. (*very sweetly*) Maud, dear ; Mr. John will escort you.

[*Street band heard playing "Fra Poco" in distance*—MAUD *takes* CHODD, JUN.'S *arm—the two couples go off, R, gate—as* MAUD *turns, she looks an adieu at* SIDNEY, *who waves the bunch of ribbon, and sits down on chair in a reverie, not perceiving* LORD PTARMIGANT'S *legs*—LORD PTARMIGANT *jumps up with pain*—SIDNEY *apologises—Curtain quick.*

ACT II

SCENE FIRST.—*Parlour at the "Owl's Roost" Public House. Cushioned seats all round the apartment ; gas lighted R. and L., over tables ; splint boxes, pipes, newspapers, &c., on table ; writing materials on R. table (near door) ; gong bell on L. table ; door of entrance, C. ; clock above door (hands set to half-past nine) ; hat pegs and hats on walls. In the chair, at L. table head, is discovered* O'SULLIVAN—*also in the following order* MAC USQUEBAUGH, AUTHOR, *and* DR. MAKVICZ—*also at R. table* TRODNON (*at head*), SHAMHEART, BRADLEY, SCARGIL—*the* REPORTER *of "Belgravian Banner" is sitting outside the R. table, near the head, and with his back turned to it, smoking a cigar—the* CHARACTERS *are all discovered drinking and smoking, some reading, some with their hats on.*

OMNES : Bravo ! hear—hear ! bravo !

O'SULL. (*on his legs, a glass in one hand, and terminating a speech, in Irish accent*) : It is, therefore, gintlemen, with the most superlative felicitee, the most fraternal convivialitee, the warmest congenialitee, the most burning friendship, and ardent admiration, that I propose his health !

OMNES : Hear ! hear, &c.

O'SULL. : He is a man, in the words of the divine bard——

TROD. (*in sepulchral voice*) : Hear ! hear !

O'SULL. : Who, in "suffering everything, has suffered nothing."

TROD. : Hear ! hear !

O'SULL. : I have known him, when in the days of his prosperitee, he rowled down to the House of Commons in his carriage.

MAC U. : 'Twasn't his own—'twas a job !

OMNES : Silence ! chair ! order !

O'SULL. : I have known him when his last copper, and his last glass of punch has been shared with the frind of his heart !

OMNES : Hear ! hear !

O'Sull. : And it is with feelings of no small pride that I inform ye, that tha frind of his heart was the humble individual who has now the honour to address ye !

Omnes : Hear ! hear, &c.

O'Sull. : But prizeman at Trinity, mimber of the bar, sinator, classical scholar, or frind, Desmond Mac Usquebaugh has always been the same—a gintleman and a scholar ; and that highest type of that glorious union—an Irish gintleman and scholar. Gintlemen, I drink his health. Desmond, my long loved frind, bless ye ! (*all rise solemnly and drink*)—" Mr. Mac Usquebaugh."

O'Sull. : Gintlemen, my frind Mr. Mac Usquebaugh will respond.

Omnes : Hear ! hear !

Enter Waiter, *with glasses, tobacco, &c., and receives orders—changes* O'Sullivan's *glass and exit, C.—Enter* Tom Stylus *and* Chodd, Jun., *C.—*Tom *has a great coat on over an evening dress.*

Chodd, Jun. : Thank you ; no, not anything.

Tom : Just a wet—an outrider—or advanced guard, to prepare the way for the champagne.

Chodd, Jun. : No.

[*As soon as the sitters see* Tom Stylus *they give him a friendly nod, look enquiringly at* Chodd, *and whisper each other.*

Tom (*R.*) : You'd better. They are men worth knowing. (*pointing them out*) That is the celebrated Olinthus O'Sullivan, Doctor of Civil Laws. (O'Sullivan *is at this moment reaching to the gas light to light his pipe*)

Chodd, Jun. (*L.*) : The gent with the long pipe ?

Tom : Yes ; one of the finest classical scholars in the world ; might have sat upon the woolsack if he'd chosen but he didn't. (O'Sullivan *is now tossing* with Mac Usquebaugh) That is the famous Desmond Mac Usquebaugh, late M.P. for Killcrackskullcoddy, county Galway, a great patriot and orator ; might have been Chancellor of the Exchequer if he'd chosen, but he didn't. (Scargil *reaches to the gas light to light his pipe*) That's Bill Bradley, (*pointing to* Bradley, *who is reading paper with double eye-glass*) author of the famous romance of " Time and Opportunity " ; ran through ten editions. He got two thousand pounds for it, which was his ruin.

Chodd, Jun. : How was he ruined by getting two thousand pounds ?

Tom : He's never done anything since. We call him " one book Bradley." That gentleman fast asleep—(*looking towards author at table, L.*) has made the the fortune of three publishers, and the buttoned-up one with the shirt front of beard is Herr Makvicz, the great United German. Dr. Scargil, there, discovered the mensuration of the motive power of the cerebral organs. (Scargil *takes pinch of snuff from a box on table*)

Chodd, Jun. : What's that ?

Tom : How many million miles per minute thought can travel. He might have made his fortune if he'd chosen.

Chodd, Jun. : But he didn't. Who is that mild looking party, with the pink complexion, and the white hair ? (*looking towards* Shamheart)

Tom : Sam Shamheart, the professional philanthropist. He makes it his business and profit to love the whole human race. (Shamheart *puffs a huge cloud of smoke from his pipe*) Smoke, sir ; all smoke. A superficial observer would consider him only a pleasant oily humbug, but I, having known him two and twenty years, feel qualified to pronounce him one of the biggest villains untransported.

Chodd, Jun. : And that man asleep at the end of the table ?

TOM : Trodnon, the eminent tragedian. (TRODNON *raises himself from the table—yawns—stretches himself, and again drops head on table*)

CHODD, JUN. : I never heard of him.

TOM : Nor anybody else. But he's a confirmed tippler, and here we consider drunkenness an infallible sign of genius—we make that a rule.

CHODD, JUN. : But if they are all such great men, why didn't they make money by their talents ?

TOM (*R.*) : Make money ! They'd scorn it ! they wouldn't do it—that's another rule. That gentleman there (*looking towards a very seedy man with eye-glass in his eye*) does the evening parties on the " Belgravian Banner."

CHODD, JUN. (*with interest*) : Does he ? Will he put my name in among the fashionables to-night ?

TOM : Yes.

CHODD, JUN. : And that we may know who's there and everything about it—you're going with me.

TOM : Yes, I'm going into *society ;* thanks to your getting me the invitation. I can dress up an account, not a mere list of names, but a picturesque report of the Soirée, and show under what brilliant auspices you entered the beau-monde.

CHODD, JUN. : Beau-monde. What's that ?

TOM (*chaffing him*) : Every man is called a cockney who is born within the sound of the beau-monde.

CHODD, JUN. (*not seeing it*) : Oh ! Order me 200 copies of the " Belgravian "—What's its name ?

TOM : " Banner."

CHODD, JUN. : The day my name's in it—and put me down as a regular subscriber. I like to encourage high class literature. By the way, shall I ask the man what he'll take to drink ?

TOM : No, no.

CHODD, JUN. : I'll pay for it. I'll stand, you know. (*going to him,* TOM *stops him*)

TOM : No, no—he don't know you, and he'd be offended.

CHODD, JUN. : But, I suppose all these chaps are plaguey poor ?

TOM : Yes, they're poor ; but they are *gent*lemen.

CHODD, JUN. (*grinning*) : I like that notion—a *poor* gentleman—it tickles me. (*going up, R.*)

TOM (*crossing into L. corner*) : Metallic snob !

CHODD, JUN. : I'm off now. (*going up, R.*) You'll come to my rooms and we'll go together in the brougham. I want to introduce you to my friends Lady Ptarmigant and Lord Ptarmigant ?

TOM : I must wait here for a proof I expect from the office.

CHODD, JUN. : How long shall you be ?

TOM (*looking at clock*) : An hour.

CHODD, JUN. : Don't be later.

[*Exit* CHODD, JUN., *C.—the* REPORTER *rises, gets paper from, L., table, and shows it to* SHAMHEART, *sitting next him on his L. hand.*

O'SULL. : Sit down, Tommy, my dear boy. Gintlemen, Mr. Desmond Mac Usquebaugh will respond. (*tapping with hammer*)

Enter WAITER, *C., and gives* BRADLEY *a glass of grog.*

MAC U. (*rising*) : Gentlemen. (TOM *taking his coat off, shows evening dress*)

TOM : A go of whiskey.

WAITER : Scotch or Irish ?

TOM : Irish.

[*Exit* WAITER, *C.—all are astonished at* TOM'S *costume—they cry* " by Jove there's a swell," *&c*

O'SULL. : Why, Tom, my dear friend—are ye going to be married to-night that ye're got up so gorgeously ?

MAC U. : Tom, you're handsome as an angel.

O'SULL. : Or a duke's footman. Gentlemen, rise and salute our illustrious brother. (*all rise and make* TOM *mock bows*)

BRAD. : The gods preserve you, noble sir.

SHAM. : May the bill of your sublime highness' washer-woman be never the less

MAC U. : And may it be paid. (*a general laugh*)

O'SULL. : Have you come into a fortune ?

DR. M. : Or married a widow ?

SHAM. : Or buried a relation ? (*a general laugh*) By my soul, Tom, you look an honour to humanity !

O'SULL. : And your laundress. (*a general laugh*)

BRAD. : Gentlemen, Mr. Stylus's health and shirt front. (*a general laugh—al drink and sit*)

TOM (*C.*) : Bless ye, my people, bless ye ! (*sits, and takes out short pipe and smokes*)

O'SULL. : Gentlemen, (*rising*) My friend, Mr. Usquebaugh, will respond.

OMNES. : Hear, hear !

MAC U. (*rising*) : Gentlemen——

Enter SIDNEY, *in evening dress and wrapper. Enter* WAITER *with* TOM'S *grog.*

OMNES : Hallo, Daryl !

SIDNEY : How are ye, boys ? Doctor, how goes it ? (*shaking hands*) Mac. How d'ye do, O'Sullivan ? Tom. I want to speak to you.

O'SULL. : Ah, Tom, this is the rale metal—the genuine thing ; compared to him you are a sort of Whitechapel would-if-I-could-be. (*to* SIDNEY) Sit down, my gorgeous one, and drink with me.

SIDNEY : No, thanks. (SIDNEY *and* TOM *sit at R. table head*)

O'SULL. : Waiter, take Mr. Daryl's orders.

SIDNEY : Brandy cold. [*Exit* WAITER, *C.*

MAC : Take off your wrap-rascal, and show your fine feathers.

SIDNEY : No ; I'm going out, and I shall smoke my coat. (TOM *extinguishes his pipe, and puts it in his dress coat pocket, then puts on his great coat, with great solemnity*)

O'SULL. : Going ?

OM : No.

O'SULL. : Got the rheumatism ?

TOM : No ; but I shall smoke my coat. (*general laugh*)

Enter WAITER, *C.—he gives glass of brandy and water to* SIDNEY, *and glass of grog to* SHAMHEART.

O'SULL. : What news, Daryl ?

SIDNEY : None, except that the Ministry is to be defeated. (O'SULLIVAN *pays* WAITER)

ALL : No !

SIDNEY : I say, yes. They're whipping up everybody to vote against Thunder's motion. Thunder is sure of a majority, and out they go. Capital brandy. (*coming forward*) Tom ! (TOM *rises—they come down stage*) I am off to a soirée.

TOM (*R.—aside*) : So am I ; but I won't tell him.

SIDNEY (*L.*) : I find I've nothing in my portmonnaie but notes. I want a trifle for a cab. Lend me five shillings.

TOM : I haven't got it ; but I can get it for you.
SIDNEY : There's a good fellow, do. (*returns to seat*)
TOM (*to* MAC USQUEBAUGH, *after looking round*) : Mac, (*whispering*) lend me five bob.
MAC U. : My dear boy, I haven't got so much.
TOM : Then don't lend it.
MAC U. : But I'll get if for you. (*crosses to* BRADLEY—*whispers*) Bradley, lend me five shillings.
BRAD. : I haven't it about me ; but I'll get it for you. (*crosses to* O'SULLIVAN—*whispers*) O'Sullivan, lend me five shillings.
O'SULL. : I haven't got it ; but I'll get it for you. (*crossing to* SCARGIL—*whispers*) Scargil, lend me five shillings.
SCARG. : I haven't got it, but I'll get it for you. (*crossing to* MAKVICZ—*whispers*) Doctor, lend me five shillings.
DR. M. : I am waiting for chaange vor a zoveren ; I'll give it you when de waiter brings it me.
SCARG. : All right ! (*to* SULLIVAN) All right !
O'SULL. : All right ! (*to* BRADLEY) All right !
BRAD. : All right ! (*to* MAC USQUEBAUGH) All right !
MAC U. : All right ! (*to* TOM) All right !
TOM (*to* SIDNEY) : All right !
O'SULL. (*tapping*) : Gentlemen, my friend Mr. Mac Usquebaugh will respond to the toast that——
MAC U. (*rising*) : Gentlemen——
SIDNEY : Oh, cut the speechifying, I hate it ! you ancients are so fond of spouting ; let's be jolly, I've only a few minutes more.
BRAD. : Daryl, sing us " Cock-a-doodle doo."
SIDNEY : I only know the first two verses.
TOM : I know the rest.

Enter WAITER, *gives glass of grog to* MAKVICZ.

SIDNEY : Then here goes. Waiter, shut the door, and don't open it till I've done. Now then, ready.

[*Exit* WAITER—O'SULLIVAN *taps*.

SIDNEY (*giving out*) : Political :—

(*sings*)
When ministers in fear and doubt,
That they should be from place kicked out,
Get up 'gainst time and sense to spout
A long dull evening through.
What mean they then by party clique,
Mob orators and factions weak ?
'Tis only would they truth then speak
But cock-a-doodle doo !
Cock-a-doodle, cock-a-doodle, cock-a-doodle doo.

CHORUS (*gravely and solemnly shaking their heads*) : Cock-a-doodle, &c.

SIDNEY (*speaking*) : Commercial :—

When companies, whose stock of cash
Directors spend to cut a dash,
Are formed to advertise and smash.
And bankruptcy go through.

When tradesfolks live in regal state,
The goods they sell adulterate,
And puff in print, why what's their prate
But cock-a-doodle-doo ?
Cock-a-doodle, cock-a-doodle, &c.

CHORUS (*as before*) : Cock-a-doodle, &c.

Enter WAITER, *C.*

O'SULL. : How dare you come in and interrupt the harmony ?
WAITER : Beg pardon, sir, but there's somebody says as he must see Mr Stylus.
TOM : Is he a devil ?
WAITER : No, sir, he's a juvenile. (*a general laugh*)
TOM : Send in some whiskey—Irish—and the devil.
WAITER : Hot, sir ? (*a general laugh*)
[TOM *nods to* WAITER, *who exits, C. door*
SIDNEY : Why can't you see your proofs at the office ?
TOM : I'm in full fig, and can't stew in that atmosphere of steam and copperas.

[*Enter* PRINTER'S BOY, *C., he goes up to* TOM *at head of R. table—Enter* WAITER *with tray, hot water jug, &c.—he gives change in silver to* MAKVICZ *who crosses to* SCARGIL—WAITER *puts hot water jug and whiskey before* TOM, *and exit C. door*

DOCTOR M. : Here ! (*giving two half crowns to* SCARGIL) Scargil !
SCARG. (*crossing in same manner to* O'SULLIVAN) : Here, O'Sullivan !
O'SULL. (*crossing to* BRADLEY) : Here, Bradley.
BRAD. (*crossing to* MAC USQUEBAUGH) : Here, Mac.
MAC. U. (*crossing to* TOM) : Here, Tom.
PRINTER'S BOY (*to* TOM) : Please, sir, Mr. Duval said would you add this to it ? (*giving* TOM *a proof slip*)
TOM : All right—wait outside—I'll bring it to you. *Exit* BOY *C.*
TOM (*draws writing pad towards him—takes his grog, and is about to pour hot water from pewter jug into it, when he burns his fingers, starts up and dances*) : Confound it !
ALL : What's the matter ?
TOM : I've scalded my fingers with the hot water.
SIDNEY (*taking up pen*) : Here, I'll correct it for you.
TOM : Thank you.
O'SULL. : Gintlemen, proceed with the harmony. Mr. Stylus——
TOM : One minute. (*to* SIDNEY.) Just add this to it.
[SIDNEY *sits down to write,* TOM *standing over him.*
TOM (*reading slip*) : " Fashionable Intelligence.—We hear a marriage is on the tapis between Mr. John Chodd, junior, son of the celebrated millionaire, and Miss Maud Hetherington, daughter of the late Colonel Hetherington."
[SIDNEY *starts.*
TOM : What's the matter ?
SIDNEY : Nothing ? (*he goes on writing*—O'SULLIVAN *taps hammer*)
TOM (*speaking*) : Amatory :—

(*sings*) When woman, lovely woman sighs,
You praise her form, her hair, her eyes ;
Would link your heart by tend'rest ties,
And vow your vows are true.

She answers tenderly and low,
Though from her lips the words that flow,
So softly sweet are nought we know
But cock-a-doodle-doo !
&c., &c., &c.

[TOM *throws the five shillings to* SIDNEY, *which rattle on the table*—SIDNEY *gives him back the proof, his face is deadly pale—as his head falls on the table the Chorus is singing*, " Cock-a-doodle-doo, &c."—*closed in.*

SCENE SECOND.—*A Retiring Room at* SIR FARINTOSH FADILEAF'S (*2nd grooves*) ; *large archway or alcove, L., with curtain drawn or doors leading to ball-room ; small arch or alcove, R., leading to supper room, with drawn curtain ; centre opening curtains drawn ; the room is decorated for a ball ; candelabra, flowers, &c.*

LADY P. (*without*) : Very pretty—very pretty indeed, Sir Farintosh ; all very nice.

Enter from R., with SIR FARINTOSH, LORD PTARMIGANT *and* MAUD, *all in evening dress.*

SIR F. (*an old beau*) : So kind of you, cousin Ptarmigant, to take pity on a poor old widower who has no womankind to receive for him, and all that.
LADY P. : Not at all—not at all ; I am only too glad to be useful.
LORD P. (*speaking off, R. 1 E.*) : Bring chairs.
LADY P. : Ferdinand, you can't want to go to sleep again !
LORD P. : I know I can't, but I do.
[SERVANT *brings two chairs and a small table, R.*
LADY P. : Besides I don't want chairs here, young men get lolling about, and then they don't dance. (LORD PTARMIGANT *sits, R., and closes his eyes*) Farintosh, (*knocks heard*) the arrivals are beginning.
SIR F. : But, Lady Ptarmigant, if——
LADY P. : Remember that the old Dowager Countess of McSwillumore has plenty of whiskey toddy in a green glass, to make believe hock.
SIR F. : But if——
LADY P. : Now go. Oh dear me ! (*almost forces* SIR FARINTOSH *off, L.*) Now, Maud, one word with you ; you have been in disgrace all this last week about that writing fellow.
MAUD (*L. indignant*) : What writing fellow ?
LADY P. : Don't echo me if you please. You know who I mean—Daryl !
MAUD : Mr. Daryl is a relation of your ladyship's—the son of the late Sir Percy Daryl, and brother of the present Baronet.
LADY P. (*R.*) : And when the present Baronet, that precious Percy, squandered everything at the gaming table, dipped the estates, and ruined himself, Sidney gave up the money left him by his mother, to reinstate a dissolute beggared brother ! don't forget that !
MAUD (*with exaltation*) : I do not forget it, I never shall. To give up all his fortune, to ruin his bright prospects to preserve his brother, and his brother's wife and children, to keep unsullied the honour of his name, was an act——
LADY P. : Of a noodle, and now he hasn't a penny save what he gets by scribbling—a pretty pass for a man of family to come to. You are my niece, and it is my solemn duty to get you married if I can. Don't thwart me, and I will. Leave sentiment to servant wenches who sweetheart the policeman, it's unworthy of a lady. I've a man in my eye—I mean a rich one—young Chodd.
MAUD (*with repugnance*) : Such a common-place person.

LADY B. : With a very uncommon-place purse. He will have eighteen thousand a year. I have desired him to pay you court, and I desire you to receive it.

MAUD : He is so vulgar.

LADY P. : He is so rich. When he is your husband put him in a back study, and don't show him.

MAUD : But I detest him.

LADY P. : What on earth has that to do with it ? You wouldn't love a man before you were married to him, would you ? Where are your principles ? Ask my lord how I treated him before our marriage. (*hitting* LORD P. *with her fan*) Ferdinand !

LORD P. (*awaking*) : My love !

LADY P. : Do keep awake.

LORD P. : 'Pon my word you were making such a noise I thought I was in the House of Commons. (*with fond regret*) I used to be allowed to sleep so comfortably there.

LADY P. : Are you not of opinion that a match between Mr. Chodd and Maud would be most desirable.

LORD P. (*looking at* LADY P.) : Am I not of opinion—my opinion—what is my opinion ?

LADY P. (*hitting him with fan*) : Yes, of course.

LORD P. : Yes—of course—my opinion is yes, of course. (*aside—crossing C. with chair*) Just as it used to be in the house. I always roused in time to vote as I was told to.

MAUD : But, uncle, one can't purchase happiness at shops in packets, like bonbons. A thousand yards of lace cost so much, they can be got at the milliner's ; but an hour of home or repose can only be had for love. Mere wealth——

LORD P. : My dear, wealth, if it does not bring happiness, brings the best imitation of it procurable for money. There are two things—wealth and poverty. The former makes the world a place to live in ; the latter a place to —go to sleep in—as I do. (*leans back in chair and dozes*)

Enter SIR FARINTOSH, COLONEL BROWSER *and* LORD CLOUDWRAYS, *L.C.*

SIR F. : Have you heard the news ? the division is to come off to-night. Many men won't be able to come. I must be off to vote. If the Ministry go out——

COL. B. : They won't go out—there'll be a dissolution !

SIR F. : And I shall have to go down to be re-elected. Cloudwrays, will you come and vote ?

LORD C. (*languidly*) : No.

SIR F. : Why not ?

LORD C. : I'm dying for a weed.

SIR F. : You can smoke in the smoking-room !

LORD C. : So I can—that didn't occur to me !

SIR F. : Ptarmigant, cousin, you do the honours for me. My country calls, you know, and all that. Come on, Cloudwrays ; how slow you are. Hi, tobacco !

[CLOUDWRAYS *rouses himself—exeunt* SIR FARINTOSH *and* LORD CLOUDWRAYS —LORD PTARMIGANT *dozes.*

COL. B. (*who has been talking to* LADY PTARMIGANT, turns to LORD PTARMIGANT) : As I was saying to her ladyship——

LADY P. : Ferdinand, do wake up !

LORD P. : Hear, hear ! (*waking*) My dear !

Enter SERVANT, *R.* 1 *E.*

PAGE : Mr. Chodd, Mr. John Chodd and Mr. Stylus.

Enter CHODD, JUN., CHODD, SEN. *and* TOM, *R.* 1 *E.—exit* SERVANT, *R.* 1. *E.*

LADY P. (*L. C.*) : My dear Mr. Chodd, how late you are ! Maud dear, here is Mr. Chodd. Do you know we were going to scold you, you naughty men !

CHODD, SEN. (*R. C., astonished—aside*) : Naughty men ! Johnny, her ladyship says we're naughty men ; we've done something wrong !

CHODD, JUN. (*R.*) : No, no—it's only her Ladyship's patrician fun. Don't call me Johnny—I'm sure I hurried here on the wings of——(*crossing L. C., falls over* LORD PTARMIGANT'S *feet, who rises and turns his chair the reverse way*—CHODD *seeing* MAUD, *repellant*)—a brougham and pair. Lady Ptarmigant, let me introduce a friend of mine. Lady Ptarmigant—Mr. Stylus, whom I took the liberty of——

LADY P. (*R. C.*) : Charmed to see any friend of yours !

[TOM *advances from back, R., abashed—as he is backing and bowing he falls over* LORD PTARMIGANT'S *legs*—LORD PTARMIGANT *rises with look of annoyance —they bow*—LORD PTARMIGANT *again turns chair and sits.*

LADY P. : Mr. Chodd, take me to the ball room. (CHODD, SEN., *offers his arm*) You will look after Maud, I'm sure. (*to* CHODD, JUN., *who smilingly offers his arm to* MAUD, *who with a suppressed look of disgust, takes it*) Mr. Si-len-us.

TOM : Stylus—ma'am—my lady.

LADY P. : Stylus—pardon me—will you be kind enough to keep my lord awake ? (*significantly*) Maud !—now, dear Mr. Chodd.

CHODD, JUN. : Guv !

[*Exeunt* LADY PTARMIGANT, MAUD, *and the* CHODDS, *L.*

TOM (*aside*) : These are two funny old swells !

COL. B. : Odd looking fellow. (*to* TOM) Nice place this !

TOM : Very.

COL. B. : And charming man, Fadileaf.

TOM : Very ;—I don't know him, but I should say he must be very jolly.

COL. B. (*laughing*) : Bravo !—why you're a wit !

TOM : Yes ! (*Aside.*) What does he mean ?

COL. B. (*offering box*) : Snuff ? Who's to win the Leger ? Diadeste ?

TOM : I don't know,—not in my department.

COL. B. (*laughing*) : Very good.

TOM : What is ? (*innocently*)

COL. B. : You are. Do you play whist ?

TOM : Yes,—cribbage and all fours, likewise.

COL. B. : We'll find another man, and make up a rubber.

TOM (*pointing to* LORD PTARMIGANT *asleep*) : He'll do for dummy.

COL. B. (*laughing*) : Capital !

TOM : What a queer fellow this is,—he laughs at everything I say. (*dance music*)

COL. B. : They've begun.

TOM (*waking up* LORD PTARMIGANT) : My lady said I was to keep you awake.

LORD P. : Thank you.

COL. B. : Come and have a rubber ! Let's go and look up Chedbury.

LORD P. : Yes.

COL. B. (*to* TOM) : You'll find us in the card-room.

[*Exeunt* LORD PTARMIGANT *and* COLONEL BROWSER, *L.*

LADY P. : Ferdinand ! (*Going up C. to* LORD PTARMIGANT, *who awakes*) Do rouse yourself, and follow me to the ball room.

[*Exeunt all but* TOM, *L. 2 E.*—LORD PTARMIGANT *returns and drags chair off after him.*

TOM : Here I am in Society, and I think Society is rather slow ; it's much jollier at the " Owl," and there's more to drink. If it were not wicked to say it, how I should enjoy a glass of gin and water !

Enter LADY PTARMIGANT, *L.*

LADY P. (*L.*) : Mr. Si-len-us !

TOM (*R.—abashed*) : Stylus, ma'am—my lady !

LADY P. : Stylus ! I beg pardon. You're all alone.

TOM : With the exception of your ladyship !

LADY P. : All the members have gone down to the House to vote, and we are dreadfully in want of men—I mean dancers ! You dance, of course ?

TOM : Oh ! of course—I——(*abashed*)

LADY P. : As it is Leap-year, I may claim the privilege of asking you to see me through a quadrille !

TOM (*R.—frightened*) : My lady ! I——

LADY P. (*L.—aside*) : He's a friend of the Chodds, and it will please them. Come then ! (*She takes his arm*)—(*sniffing*) Dear me ! What a dreadful smell of tobacco ! (*sniffing*)

TOM (*awfully self-conscious—sniffing*) : Is there ?

LADY P. (*sniffing*) : Some fellow must have been smoking.

TOM (*sniffing*) : I think some fellow must, or some fellow must have been where some other fellows have been smoking. (*aside*) It's that beastly parlour at the " Owl." (*in taking out his pocket handkerchief his pipe falls on floor*)

LADY P. : What's that ?

TOM (*in torture*) : What's what ? (*Turning about and looking through eye glass at the air*)

LADY B. (*pointing*) : That !

TOM (*as if in doubt*) : I rather think—it—is—a pipe !

LADY P. : I'm sure of it. You'll join me in the ball-room. (*going up C. to L.*)

TOM : Instantly, your ladyship. [*Exit* LADY PTARMIGANT, *L.* (*looking at pipe—he picks it up*). If ever I bring you into society again——(*drops it*) Waiter !

Enter PAGE, *R.* 1 *E.*

Somebody's dropped something. Remove the whatsoname.

(*Quadrille Music in ballroom,* PAGE *goes off, R.* 1 *E. and returns with tray and sugar tongs, with which he picks up pipe with an air of ineffable disgust and goes off, R.* 1 *E.*)

Now to spin round the old woman in the mazy waltz (*splits kid gloves in drawing them on*) ; there goes one and nine. [*Exit* TOM, *L.*

Enter SIDNEY, *L.—he is pale and excited—one of the gold links of his wrist-band is unfastened.*

SID. : I have seen her—she was smiling—dancing, but not with him. She looked so bright and happy. I won't think of her. How quiet it is here : so different to that hot room with the crowd of fools and coquettes whirling round each other. I like to be alone—alone ! I am now thoroughly—and to think it was but a week ago—one little week—I'll forget her—forget, and hate her :—Hate her—Oh, Maud ; Maud ; till now, I never knew how much I loved you ; loved you—loved you—gone ; shattered ; shivered : and for whom ?—for one of my own birth ? for one of my own rank ?—No ! for a common clown, who—confound this link—but he is rich—and—it won't hold (*trying*

to fasten it—his fingers trembling). I've heard it all—always with her, at the Opera and the Park attentive and obedient—and she accepts him. My head aches—(*louder*) I'll try a glass of champagne.

TOM (*without, R.*) : Champagne—here you are ! (*draws curtain*)

Enter TOM, *R. 2 E., with champagne glass, from supper-room—portion of supper table seen in alcove.*

TOM (*seeing* SIDNEY) : Sidney.

SIDNEY : Tom ! you here !

TOM : Very much here : (*drinking*) I was brought by Mr. Chodd.

SIDNEY (*L.*) : Chodd ?

TOM (*R.*) : Don't startle a fella. You look pale—aren't you well ?

SIDNEY (*rallying*) : Jolly, never better.

TOM : Have some salmon.

SIDNEY : I'm not hungry.

TOM : Then try some jelly, it's no trouble to masticate and is emollient and agreeable to the throat and palate.

SIDNEY : No, Tom, champagne.

TOM : There you are. (*fetching bottle from table*)

SIDNEY : I'll meet her eye to eye. (*drinks*) Another, Tom—and be as smiling and indifferent. As for that heavy-metalled dog—thanks, Tom. (*drinks*) Another.

TOM : I've been drinking with old Lady Ptarmigant.

SIDNEY : Confound her.

TOM : I did. As I was twirling her round I sent my foot through her dress and tore her skirt out of the gathers.

SIDNEY (*laughing hysterically*) : Good ! good ! bravo ! Tom ! Did she row you ?

TOM : Not a bit. She said it was of no consequence ; but her looks were awful.

SIDNEY : Ha ! ha ! ha ! Tom you're a splendid fellow, not like these damned swells, all waistcoat and shirt front.

TOM : But I like the swells. I played a rubber with them and won three pounds, then I shewed them some conjuring tricks—you know I'm a famous conjuror (*taking a pack of cards out of his pocket*). By Jupiter ! look here, I've brought the pack away with me ; I didn't know I had. I'll go and take it back.

SIDNEY (*taking cards from him absently*) : No, never mind, stay with me, I don't want you to go.

TOM : I find high life most agreeable, everybody is so amiable, so thoughtful, so full of feeling.

SIDNEY : Feeling ! Why man, this is a flesh market where the matchmaking mammas and chattering old chaperons have no more sense of feeling than drovers—the girls no more sentiment than sheep, and the best man is the highest bidder ; that is, the biggest fool with the longest purse.

TOM : Sidney, you're ill.

SIDNEY : You lie, Tom—never better—excellent high spirits—confound this link !

Enter LORD CLOUDWRAYS *and* SIR FARINTOSH, *L.*

LORD C.
SIR F. : } By Jove ! Ha, Sidney, heard the news ?

SIDNEY (*C.*) : News—there is no news ! the times are bankrupt, and the assignees have sold off the events.

LORD C.
SIR F. } The Ministry is defeated.

TOM (*R.*) : No.
LORD C. } Yes ; by a majority of forty-six.
SIR F. }
SIDNEY : Serve them right.
LORD C. } Why ?
SIR F. }
SIDNEY : I don't know ! Why, what a fellow you are to want reasons.
LORD C. : Sidney !
SIDNEY : Hollo, Cloudwrays ! my bright young British senator—my undeveloped Chatham, and mature Raleigh.
TOM : Will they resign ?
SIDNEY : Of course they will : resignation is the duty of every man, or minister, who can't do anything else.
TOM : Who will be sent for to form a government ?
SIDNEY : Cloudwrays.
LORD C. : How you do chaff a man !
SIDNEY : Why not ? Inaugurate a new policy—the policy of smoke—free trade in tobacco ! Go in, not for principles, but for Principes—our hearths—our homes, and 'bacca-boxes !
TOM : If there's a general election ?
SIDNEY : Hurrah, for a general election ! eh, Cloudwrays—eh, Farintosh ? What speeches you'll make—what lies you'll tell, and how your constituents *won't* believe you !
LORD C. } How odd you are.
SIR F. }
LORD C. : Arn't you well ?
SIDNEY : Glorious ! only one thing annoys me.
LORD C. } What's that ?
SIR F. }
SIDNEY : They won't give me any more champagne.

Enter COLONEL BROWSER, *L.*

LORD C. } Lady Ptarmigant sent me here to say——
COL. B. } Farintosh, the ladies want partners.
[COLONEL *and* SIR FARINTOSH *go off, L.*
SIDNEY : Partners ! Here are partners for them—long, tall, stout, fat, thin, poor, rich. (*crossing, C.*) Cloudwrays you're the man !

Enter CHODD, JUN., *L.*—SIDNEY *sees and points to him.*

SIDNEY : No ; this is the man !
CHODD, JUN. (*L.*) : Confound this fellow ! (*aside*)
SIDNEY (*L. C.*) : This, sir, is the "Young Lady's Best Companion," well bound, Bramah-locked, and gilt at the edges—mind, gilt only at the edges. This link will *not* hold. (*sees the pack of cards in his hand*) Here, Chodd, take these—no, cut for a ten pound note. (*puts cards on small table, R.*)
CHODD, JUN. (*L. C., quickly*) : With pleasure. (*aside*) I'll punish this audacious pauper in the pocket. (*crossing to table*)
LORD C. : You mustn't gamble here.
SIDNEY : Only for a frolic !
CHODD, JUN. : I'm always lucky at cards !
SIDNEY : Yes, I know an old proverb about that.
CHODD, JUN. : Eh ?
SIDNEY (*R.*) : Lucky at play, unlucky in—— This link will not hold.
CHODD, JUN. (*L. C., maliciously*) : Shall we put the stakes down first ?

SIDNEY (*producing portmonnaie*) : With pleasure !
LORD C. : But I don't think it right—— (*advancing*—CHODD *stays him with his arm*)
TOM : Sidney !
SIDNEY : Nonsense ! hold your tongue, Cloudwrays, and I'll give you a regalia. Let's make it for five-and-twenty ?
CHODD, JUN. : Done !
SIDNEY : Lowest wins—that's in your favour.
CHODD, JUN. : Eh ?
SIDNEY : Ace is lowest. (*they cut*) Mine ! Double the stakes ?
CHODD, JUN. : Done ! (*they cut*)
SIDNEY : Mine again ! Double again ?
CHODD, JUN. : Done ! (*they cut*)
SIDNEY : You're done again ! I'm in splendid play to-night. One hundred I think !
CHODD, JUN. : I'd play again (*handing notes*) but I've no more with me.
SIDNEY : Your word's sufficient—you can send to my chambers—besides, you've got your cheque book. A hundred again ?
CHODD, JUN. : Yes. (*they cut*)
SIDNEY : Huzzah ! Fortune's a lady ! Again ? (CHODD *nods—they cut*) Bravo ! Again ? (CHODD *nods—they cut*) Mine again ! Again ? (CHODD *nods—they cut*) Mine again ! Again ? (CHODD *nods—they cut*) Same result ? That makes five ! Let's go in for a thousand ?
CHODD, JUN. : Done !
LORD C. (*advancing*) : No !
CHODD, JUN. (*savagely*) : Get out of the way ! (LORD CLOUDWRAYS *looks at him through eye glass in astonishment*).
SIDNEY : Pooh ! (*they cut*) Mine ! Double again ?
CHODD, JUN. : Yes.
LORD C. (*going round to back of table and seizing the pack*) : No ; I can't suffer this to go on—Lady Ptarmigant would be awful angry. (*going off, L.*)
SIDNEY : Here, Cloudwrays ! what a fellow you are.

[*Exit* LORD CLOUDWRAYS, *L. C.*

(*Turning to* CHODD, JUN.) : You owe me a thousand !
CHODD, JUN. : I shall not forget it.
SIDNEY : I don't suppose you will. Confound—(*trying to button sleeve link, crossing C.*) Oh, to jog your memory, take this. (*gives him sleeve link, which he has been trying to button, and goes off after* LORD CLOUDWRAYS, *L. C.*)
CHODD, JUN. : And after I have paid you, I'll remember and clear off the old score.
TOM (*R., taking his arm as he is going*) : Going into the ball room ?
CHODD, JUN. (*L., aghast at his intrusion*) : Yes !
TOM (*R.*) : I'll go with you.
CHODD, JUN. (*L., disengaging his arm*) : I'm engaged !

[*Exit* CHODD, *L. Music till end.*

TOM : You've an engaging manner ! I'm like a donkey between two bundles of hay. On one side woman—lovely woman ! on the other, wine and wittles. (*taking out a sovereign*) Heads, supper—tails, the ladies—(*tosses at table*) Supper ! sweet goddess Fortune, accept my thanks ! [*Exit into supper room, R.*

Enter MAUD *and* CHODD, JUN., *L.*

MAUD (*L.*) : This dreadful man follows me about everywhere.
CHODD, JUN. (*R.*) : My dear Miss Hetherington !

MAUD : I danced the last with you.
CHODD, JUN. : That was a quadrille.

Enter SIDNEY, *L.*

This is for a polka.
SIDNEY (*advancing between them*) : The lady is engaged to me.
CHODD, JUN. : This fellow's turned up again. (*to him*) I beg your pardon.
SIDNEY : I beg yours ! I have a prior claim. (*bitterly*) Ask the lady—or perhaps I had better give her up to you.
MAUD : The next dance with you, Mr. Chodd, this one——
CHODD, JUN. : Miss, your commands are acts of Parliament. (*looking spitefully at* SIDNEY *as he crosses, L.*) I'll go and see what Lady Ptarmigant has to say to this. [*Exit* CHODD, JUNIOR, *L.—Music changes to a slow waltz.*
SIDNEY : Listen to me for the last time. My life and being were centred in you. You have abandoned me for money. You accepted me ; you now throw me off, for money. You pledged your faith ; you now break it, for money ! You gave your hand, you now retract, for money ! You are about to wed—a knave, a brute, a fool, whom in your own heart you despise, for money !
MAUD. : How dare you ?
SIDNEY : Where falsehood is, shame cannot be. The last time we met, (*producing ribbon*) you gave me this. See, 'tis the colour of a man's heart's blood. (*curtains or doors at back draw apart*) I give it back to you. (*casting the bunch of ribbon at her feet*)

[LORD CLOUDWRAYS, SIR FARINTOSH, COLONEL BROWSER, TOM, LORD PTARMIGANT, *and* LADY PTARMIGANT, CHODD, JUNIOR, *and* CHODD, SENIOR, *appear at back*—GUESTS *seen in ball room.*

And tell you, shameless girl, much as I once loved, and adored, I now despise and hate you.
LADY P. (*advancing, C., in a whisper to* SIDNEY) : Leave the house, sir ! How dare you—go !
SIDNEY : Yes ; anywhere.

[*crash of Music*—MAUD *is nearly falling when* CHODD, JUN., *appears near her—she is about to lean on his arm, but recognising him, retreats and staggers—* SIDNEY *is seen to reel through ball room full of dancers—drop.*

ACT III

SCENE FIRST.—"*The Owl's Roost.*" (*Same as Scene 1st Act 2nd,*) *daylight—the room in order.*

TOM *discovered writing at table, R.,* BOY *sitting on table, L., and holding the placards, on which is printed*—"Read the Morning Earthquake—a first-class daily Paper," &c. *On the other,* "The Evening Earthquake—a first-class daily Paper—Latest Intelligence," &c.
TOM : Um ! It'll look well on the walls, and at the railway stations—take these back to the office (*boy jumps down*) to Mr. Piker, and tell him he must wait for the last leader—till it's written.

[*Exit* BOY, *C.,* TOM *walks to and fro smoking long clay pipe.*

The M. E.—that is, the "Morning Earthquake," shakes the world for the first time to-morrow morning, and everything seems to have gone wrong with it. It is a crude unmanageable ill-disciplined, ill-regulated earthquake—Heave the first—Old Chodd behaves badly to me :—after organising him a first-rate earthquake, engaging him a brilliant staff, and stunning reporters, he doesn't even offer me the post of sub-editor—ungrateful old humbug ! Heave the second :—no sooner is he engaged than our editor is laid up with

the gout—and then old Chodd asks me to be a literary warming pan, and keep his place hot, till colchicum and cold water have done their work—I'll be even with old Chodd though ! I'll teach him what it is to insult a man who has started eighteen daily and weekly papers—all of them failures. Heave the third—Sidney Daryl won't write the social leaders. (*sits L. at end of R. table*) Poor Sidney ! (*takes out the magenta ribbon which he picked up at the ball*) I shan't dare to give him this—I picked it up at the ball, at which I was one of the distinguished, and illustrious guests. Love is an awful swindler—always drawing upon Hope, who never honours his draughts—a sort of whining beggar, continually moved on by the maternal police—but 'tis a weakness to which the wisest of us are subject—a kind of manly measles which this flesh is heir to, particularly when the flesh is heir to nothing else—even I have felt the divine damnation—I mean emanation. But the lady united herself to another, which was a very good thing for me, and anything but a misfortune for her. Ah ! happy days of youth—Oh ! flowering fields of Runnington-cum-Wapshot—where the yellow corn waved, our young loves ripened, and the new jail now stands. Oh ! Sally, when I think of you and the past, I feel that (*looking into his pot*) the pot's empty, and I could drink another pint. (*putting the ribbon in his pocket*) Poor Sidney—I'm afraid he's going to the bad.

Enter SIDNEY, *C. he strikes bell on L. table and sits at the head—his appearance altered.*

TOM : Ha ! Sid, is that you ? talk of the ——how de do ?

SIDNEY : Quite well—how are you ?

TOM : I'm suffering from an earthquake in my head—and a general printing office in my stomach. Have some beer ?

Enter WAITER, *C.*

SIDNEY : No thanks—brandy——

TOM : So early ?

SIDNEY : And soda. I didn't sleep last night.

TOM : Brandy and soda, and beer again.

[*Exit* WAITER, *with pint pot off R. table.*

SIDNEY : I never do sleep now—I can't sleep.

TOM : Work hard.

Enter WAITER, *C.*

SID. : I do—it is my only comfort—my old pen goes driving along at the rate of——

[WAITER—*after placing pint of porter before* TOM—*places tray with brandy and soda before* SIDNEY.

That's right ! (WAITER *uncorks soda and Exit, C.*) What a splendid discovery was brandy. (*drinks*)

TOM : Yes, the man who invented it deserves a statue.

SIDNEY : That's the reason that he doesn't get one.

TOM (*reading paper*) : Election intelligence. There's the general election—why not go in for that.

SIDNEY : Election—pooh ! what do I care for that !

TOM : Nothing of course, but it's occupation.

SIDNEY (*musing*) : I wonder who'll put up for Springmead

TOM : Your brother's seat, wasn't it ?

SIDNEY : Yes, our family's for years. By-the-way, I'd a letter from Percy last mail ; he's in trouble, poor fellow—his little boy is dead, and he himself is in such ill-health that they have given him sick leave. We are an unlucky race, we Daryls. Sometimes, Tom, I wish that I were dead.

TOM : Sidney !

SIDNEY : It's a bad wish I know ; but what to me is there worth living for ?

TOM : What ! oh, lots of things. Why, there's the police reports—mining intelligence—hop districts—the tallow market—ambition—society !

SIDNEY (*heartily*) : Damn society !

TOM : And you know, Sid, there are more women in the world than one.

SIDNEY : But only one a man can love.

TOM : I don't know about that : temperaments differ.

SIDNEY (*pacing about and reciting*) : " As the husband, so the wife is.

" Thou art mated to a clown :
And the grossness of his nature
Shall have power to drag thee down :
He will hold thee when his passion
Shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, and
Little dearer than his horse."

I'm ashamed of such a want of spirit—ashamed to be such a baby ! And you, Tom, are the only man in the world I'd show it to ; but I—I can think of nothing else but her—and—and of the fate in store for her. (*sobs and leans on table with his face in his hands*)

TOM : Don't give way, Sid ; there are plenty of things in this life to care for.

SIDNEY : Not for me—not for me.

TOM : Oh, yes ! there's friendship ; and—and—the little girl, you know !

SIDNEY : That reminds me, I wrote a week ago to Mrs. Churton, asking her to meet me with Mau—with the little darling in the square. I always asked them to come from Hampstead to the square, that I might look up at her window as I passed. What a fool I've been—I can't meet them this morning ! Will you go for me ?

TOM : With pleasure.

SIDNEY : Give Mrs. Churton this. (*wrapping up money in paper from* TOM's *case*) It's the last month's money. Tell her I'm engaged, and can't come—and—— (*putting down money*) buy the baby a toy, bless her ! What a pity to think she'll grow up to be a woman !

Enter MAC USQUEBAUGH, O'SULLIVAN, *and* MAKVICZ.

MAC U. (*entering*) : A three of whiskey, hot !

O'SULL. : The same for me—neat.

DR. M. : A pint of stoot. (*All sit, R.*)

O'SULL. : Tom, mee boy, what news of the *Earthquake ?*

Enter WAITER *with orders, and gives* TOM *a note.*

TOM : Heaving, sir—heaving. (TOM *opens note*—SIDNEY *sits abstracted*) Who's going electioneering ?

DR. M. : I am.

O'SULL. : And I.

MAC U. : And so am I.

TOM : Where ?

MAC U. : I don't know.

O'SULL. : Somewhere—anywhere.

TOM (*reading note*) : From Chodd, senior—the old villain ! (*reads*) " Dear Sir, —Please meet me at Lady Ptarmigant's at eleven p.m." (*suddenly*) Sidney !

SIDNEY (*moodily*) : What ?

TOM (*reading note*) : " I am off to Springmead-le-Beau by the train at two-fifty. My son, Mr. John Chodd, junior, is the candidate for the seat for the borough."

SIDNEY (*rising*) : What !—that hound !—that cur !—that digesting cheque book —represent the town that my family have held their own for centuries. I'd sooner put up for it myself. (*rising*)

TOM (*rising*) : Why not ? Daryl for Springmead—here's occupation—here's revenge !

SIDNEY : By heaven, I will ! (*crosses into R., and returns*)

TOM (*C.*) : Gentlemen, the health of Mr. Daryl, M.P. for Springmead. (SIDNEY *crosses to L.*)

OMNES (*rising and drinking*) : Hurrah !

TOM : We'll canvas for you. (*aside*) And now, Mr. Chodd, senior, I see the subject for the last leader. I'll fetter you with your own type. (*down, L.*)

SIDNEY (*crosses, C.*) : I'll do it ! I'll do it ! When does the next train start ?

MAC U. (*taking Bradshaw from table, R.*) : At two-fifty—the next at five.

SIDNEY (*crossing to L.*) : Huzza ! (*with excitement*) I'll rouse up the tenants—call on the tradesmen ! (*crossing to C.*)

O'SULL. : But the money ?

SIDNEY (*C.*) : I'll fight him with the very thousand that I won of him. Besides, what need has a Daryl of money at Springmead ?

TOM : We can write for you.

O'SULL. : (*R.C.*) And fight for you.

SIDNEY : I feel so happy—call cabs.

MAC U. : How many ?

SIDNEY : The whole rank ! (*goes up, C.*)

TOM : But, Sidney, what colours shall we fight under ?

SIDNEY : What colours ? (*feels in his breast and appears dejected*—TOM *hands him the ribbons—he clutches them eagerly*) What colours ?—magenta !

OMNES : Huzzah ! (*closed in as they go up*)

SCENE SECOND.—*An Apartment at* LORD PTARMIGANT'S. (*1st grooves*)

A chair brought on by PAGE, *R. 1 E.*

LADY P. (*without, L. 1 E.*) : Good-bye, dear Mr. Chodd. A pleasant ride, and all sorts of success.

Enter LADY PTARMIGANT, *L. 1 E.*

Phew ! there's the old man gone. Now to speak to that stupid Maud (*looking off, R.*) There she sits in the sulks—a fool ! Ah, what wise folks the French were before the Revolution, when there was a Bastile or a convent in which to pop dangerous young men and obstinate young women. (*sweetly*) Maud dear ! I'll marry her to young Chodd, I'm determined.

Enter MAUD, *R. 1 E., very pensive.*

LADY P. : Maud, I wish to speak to you.

MAUD : Upon what subject, aunt ?

LADY P. (*L.*) : One that should be very agreeable to a girl of your age—marriage.

MAUD (*R.*) : Mr. Chodd again.

LADY P. : Yes, Mr. Chodd again.

MAUD : I hate him !

LADY P. : You wicked thing ! How dare you use such expressions in speaking of a young gentleman so rich ?

MAUD : Gentleman !

LADY P. : Yes, gentleman !—at least he will be.

MAUD : Nothing can make Mr. Chodd—what a name !—anything but what he is.

LADY P. : Money can do everything.

MAUD : Can it make me love a man I hate ?

LADY P. : Yes ; at least, if it don't it ought. I suppose you mean to marry somebody ?

MAUD : No.

LADY P. : You audacious girl ! how can you talk so wickedly ? Where do you expect to go to ?

MAUD : To needlework ! Anything from this house ; and from this persecution.

LADY P. : Miss Hetherington !

MAUD : Thank you, Lady Ptarmigant, for calling me by my name ; it reminds me who I am, and of my dead father, " Indian Hetherington," as he was called. It reminds me that the protection you have offered to his orphan daughter has been hourly embittered by the dreadful temper, which is an equal affliction to you as to those within your reach. It reminds me that the daughter of such a father should not stoop to a mesalliance. (*crossing to L.*)

LADY P. : Mesalliance ! How dare you call Mr. Chodd a mesalliance ? And you hankering after that paltry, poverty-stricken penny-a-liner !

MAUD : Lady Ptarmigant, you forget yourself ; and you are untruthful. Mr. Daryl is a gentleman by birth and breeding ! I loved him—I acknowledge it —I love him still !

LADY P. : You shameless girl ! and he without a penny ! After the scene he made !

MAUD : He has dared to doubt me, and I have done with him for ever. From the moment he presumed to think that I could break my plighted word—that I could be false to the love I had acknowledged—the love that was my happiness and pride—all between us was over.

LADY P. (*aside*) : That's some comfort. (*aloud*) Then what do you intend to do ?

MAUD : I intend to leave the house.

LADY P. : To go where ?

MAUD : Anywhere from you !

LADY P. : Upon my word ! (*aside*) She has more spirit than I gave her credit for. (*aloud*) And do you mean to tell me that that letter is not intended for that fellow, Daryl ?

MAUD (*giving letter*) : Read it.

LADY P. (*opens it and reads*) : " To the Editor of the ' Times.' Please insert the enclosed advertisement, for which I send stamps. Wanted a situation as governess by "—(*embracing* MAUD) Oh, my dear—dear girl ! you couldn't think of such a thing—and you a lady, and my niece.

MAUD (*disengaging herself*) : Lady Ptarmigant, please don't !

LADY P. (*thoroughly subdued*) : But, my love, how could I think——

MAUD : What Lady Ptarmigant thinks is a matter of the most profound indifference to me.

LADY P. (*aside*) : Bless her ! Exactly what I was at her age. (*aloud*) But, my dear Maud, what is to become of you ?

MAUD : No matter what ! welcome poverty—humiliation—insult—the contempt of fools—welcome all but dependence ! I will neither dress myself at the expense of a man I despise, control his household, owe him duty, or lead a life that is a daily lie ; neither will I marry one I love, who has dared to doubt me, to drag him into deeper poverty. (*crossing to R.*)

Enter SERVANT, *L.* 1 *E.*

SERVANT : My Lady, there is a gentleman enquiring for Mr. Chodd.

LADY P. : Perhaps some electioneering friend. Show him here. [*Exit* SERVANT Don't leave the room, Maud, dear.

MAUD : I was not going—why should I ?

SERVANT *shows in* TOM *with* LITTLE MAUD, *L.* 1 *E.*

LADY P. : It's the tobacco man !

TOM (*to* CHILD) : Do I smell of smoke ? I beg your ladyship's pardon, but Mr. Chodd, the old gentleman, wished me to meet him here.

LADY P. : He has just driven off to the station.

TOM : I know I'm a few minutes behind time—there's the young lady. Good morning, Miss—Miss—I don't know the rest of her—I—I—have been detained by the—this little girl——

LADY P. (*C.*) : A sweet little creature, Mr. Silenus.

TOM (*L.*) : Stylus.

LADY P. : Stylus, pardon me.

TOM (*aside*) : This old lady will insist on calling me Silenus ! She'd think me very rude if I called her Ariadne.

LADY P. : Sweet little thing ! Come here, my dear ! (LITTLE MAUD *crosses to her*) Your child, Mr.—Stylus ?

TOM : No, my lady, this is Mr. Sidney Daryl's protegee.

LADY P. (*moving from* LITTLE MAUD) : Whose ?

TOM : Sidney Daryl's. (MAUD *advances*)

LADY P. : Nasty little wretch ! How do you mean ? Speak, quickly !

TOM : I mean that Sidney pays for her education, board, and all that. Oh, he's a splendid fellow—a heart of gold ! (*aside*) I'll put in a good word for him, as his young woman's here. I'll make her repent !

MAUD (*R.*) : Come to me, child. (LITTLE MAUD *crosses to her*) Who are you ?

L. MAUD : I'm Mrs. Churton's little darling, and Mr. Daryl's little girl (*crosses to* TOM *as* MAUD *moves away, and sinks into chair, R.*)

LADY P. (*C.*) : His very image. (*goes to* MAUD)

TOM (*L.*) : Bless her little tongue ! I took her from the woman who takes care of her. She's going down with me to Springmead. I've bought her a new frock, all one colour, magenta. (*aside*) That was strong.

LADY P. : Did I tell you Mr. Chodd had gone ?

TOM : I'm one too many here. I'll vamose ! Good morning, my lady.

LADY P. : Good morning, Mr.—Bacchus.

TOM : Stylus—Stylus ! I shall have to call her Ariadne. Um ! they might have asked the child to have a bit of currant cake, or a glass of currant wine. Shabby devils !

[*Exeunt* TOM *and* LITTLE MAUD, *L.* 1 *E.—a pause.*

LADY P. (*aside*) : Could anything have happened more delightfully ?

MAUD (*throwing herself into* LADY PTARMIGANT'S *arms*) : Oh, Aunty ! forgive me — I was wrong—I was ungrateful—forgive me ! Kiss me, and forgive me ! I'll marry Mr. Chodd—anybody—do with me as you please.

LADY P. : My dear niece ! (*affected*) I—I feel for you. I'm—I'm not so heartless as I seem. I know I'm a harsh, severe old woman, but I am a woman, and I can feel for you ! (*embracing her*)

MAUD : And to think that with the same breath he could swear that he loved me, while another—this child, too ! (*bursts into a flood of tears*) There, aunt, I won't cry. I'll dry my eyes—I'll do your bidding. You mean me well, while he—oh ! (*shudders*) Tell Mr. Chodd I'll bear his name, and bear it worthily ! (*sternly—sits, R.*)

LADY P. (*embracing—kissing her at each stop*) : Men are a set of brutes. I was jilted myself when I was twenty-three—and, oh, how I loved the fellow ! But I asserted my dignity, and married Lord Ptarmigant, and *he*, and *he* only, can tell you how I have avenged my sex ! Cheer up, my darling ! love, sentiment, and romance are humbug !—but wealth, position, jewels, balls, presentations, a country-house, town mansion, society, power—that's true solid happiness, and if it isn't, I don't know what is ! [*Exeunt, R. 1 E.*

SCENE THIRD.—*The Wells at Springmead-le-Beau.—An avenue of elms, sloping off to R. U. E., on L.—house with windows, &c., on to lawn—railings at back of stage.*

Garden seats, chairs, lounges, small tables, &c., discovered near house, L.—LORD PTARMIGANT *discovered asleep in garden-chair against house, L., his feet resting on another—Enter* CHODD, SEN., *down avenue, R.*

CHODD, SEN. : Oh, dear ! oh, dear ! What a day this is ! There's Johnny to be elected, and I'm expecting the first copy of the " Morning Earthquake,"—my paper ! my own paper !—by the next train. Then here's Lady Ptarmigant says that positively her niece will have Johnny for her wedded husband, and in one day my Johnny is to be a husband, an M.P., and part proprietor of a daily paper ! Whew ! how hot it is ! It's lucky that the wells are so near the hustings—one can run under the shade and get a cooler. Here's my lord ! (*waking him*) My lord !

LORD P. (*waking*) : Oh ! eh ! Mr. Chodd—good morning !—how de do !

CHODD, SEN. (*sitting on stool, L.*) : Oh, flurried, and flustered, and worritted. You know to-day's the election.

LORD P. : Yes, I believe there is an election going on somewhere. (*calling*) A tumbler of the waters No. 2.

Enter WAITRESS *from house, L., places tumbler of water on table, and exit.*

CHODD, SEN. : Oh, what a blessing there is no opposition ! If my boy is returned ——(*rising*)

Enter CHODD, JUN., *agitated, a placard in his hand, R. 2 E.*

CHODD, JUN. : Look here, guv ! look here !

CHODD, SEN. : What is it, my Johnny !

CHODD, JUN. : Don't call me Johnny ! Look here ! (*shows electioneering placard, " Vote for Daryl ! "*

CHODD, SEN. : What ?

CHODD, JUN. : That vagabond has put up as candidate ! His brother used to represent the borough.

CHODD, SEN. : Then the election will be contested ?

CHODD, JUN. : Yes. (CHODD, SENIOR, *sinks on garden chair*)

LORD P. (*rising, and taking tumbler from table*) : Don't annoy yourself, my dear Mr. Chodd ; these accidents will happen in the best regulated constituencies.

CHODD, JUN. : Guv, don't be a fool !

LORD P. : Try a glass of the waters.

[CHODD, SEN., *takes tumbler and drinks, and the next moment ejects the water with a grimace, stamping about.*

CHODD, SEN. : Oh, what filth ! O-o-o-o-o-oh !

LORD P. : It is an acquired taste. (*to* WAITER) Another tumbler of No. 2.

CHODD, SEN. : So, Johnny, there's to be a contest, and you won't be M.P. for Springmead after all.

CHODD, JUN. : I don't know that.

CHODD, SEN. : What d'ye mean ?

CHODD, JUN. : Mr. Sidney Daryl may lose, and, perhaps, Mr. Sidney Daryl mayn't show. After that ball——

CHODD, SEN. : Where you lost that thousand pounds.

CHODD, JUN. : Don't keep bringing that up, guvenor. After that I bought up all Mr. Daryl's bills—entered up judgment, and left them with Aaron. I've telegraphed to London, and if Aaron don't nab him in town, he'll catch him here.

CHODD, SEN. : But, Johnny, isn't that rather mean ?

CHODD, JUN. : All's fair in love and Parliament.

Enter COUNTRY BOY *with newspaper, R. 1 E.*

BOY : Mr. Chodd ?

CHODD, SEN. } : Here !
CHODD, JUN. }

BOY : Just arrived.

CHODD, JUN. : " The Morning Earthquake." (*they both clutch at it eagerly—each secures a paper, and sit under tree, R.*).

CHODD, SEN. (*R.—reading*) : Look at the leader. " In the present aspect of European politics——"

CHODD, JUN. (*L.*) : " Some minds seem singularly obtuse to the perception of an idea."

CHODD, SEN. : Johnny !

CHODD, JUN. : Guv !

CHODD, SEN. : Do you see the last leader ?

CHODD, JUN. : Yes.

CHODD, SEN. (*reading*) : " The borough of Springmead-le-Beau has for centuries been represented by the house of Daryl."

CHODD, JUN. (*reading*) : " A worthy scion of that ancient race intends to offer himself as candidate at the forthcoming election, and, indeed, who will dare to oppose him ? "

CHODD, SEN. : " Surely not a Mister——"

CHODD, JUN. : " Chodd." (*they rise and come down*)

CHODD, SEN. : " Whoever he may be."

CHODD, JUN. : " What are the Choddian antecedents ? "

CHODD, SEN. : " Whoever heard of Chodd ? "

CHODD, JUN. : " To be sure a young man of that name has recently been the cause of considerable laughter at the clubs on account of his absurd attempts to become a man of fashion." (*both crossing L. and R.*)

CHODD, SEN. (*R.*) : " And to wriggle himself into Society." (*crossing again*)

CHODD, JUN. (*R.*) : Why, it's all in his favour. (*in a rage.*)

CHODD, SEN. : In our own paper too. Oh, that villain Stylus ! (*crossing R.*).

CHODD, JUN. (*crossing R.*) : There are no more of these in the town, are there ?

BOY : Yes, sir. A man came down with two thousand ; he's giving them away everywhere.

CHODD, JUN. : Confound you ! (*pushes him off, R. 1 E.—follows*)

CHODD, SEN. : Oh, dear ! oh, dear ! oh, dear ! Now, my lord, isn't that too bad. (*sees him asleep*) He's off again ! (*waking him*) My lord, here's the " Earthquake ! " (*half throwing him off seat*).

LORD P. : Earthquake ? Good gracious ! I didn't feel anything. (*rising*)

CHODD, SEN. : No, no, the paper.

LORD P. : Ah, most interesting. (*drops paper, and leisurely reseats himself*) My dear Mr. Chodd, I congratulate you.

CHODD, SEN. : Congratulate me ? (*looks at watch*) I must be off to the committee. [*Exit* CHODD, SEN., *L. 2 E.*

LORD P. : Waiter ! am I to have that tumbler of No. 2 ?

[*Band heard playing* "Conquering Hero," *and loud cheers as* LORD PTARMIGANT *goes into house, L., and enter* SIDNEY, O'SULLIVAN, MAC USQUEBAUGH, *and* DR MAKVICZ, *R. U. E.*—SIDNEY *bowing off as he enters—cheers.*

SIDNEY : So far so good. I've seen lots of faces that I knew. I'll run this Dutch-metalled brute hard, and be in an honourable minority anyhow.

Enter TOM, *hastily, R. 1 E.*

TOM : Daryl.

SIDNEY : Yes.

TOM : Look out.

SIDNEY : What's the matter ?

TOM : I met our friend Moses Aaron on the platform. He didn't see you, but what does he want here ?

SIDNEY : Me, if anybody. (*musing*) This is a shaft from the bow of Mr. John Chodd, junior. I see his aim.

TOM : What's to be done ? The voters are warm, but, despite the prestige of the family name, if you were not present——

SIDNEY : Besides, I couldn't be returned from Cursitor Street, M.P. for the Queen's Bench. (*thinking.*) Did the Lamb come down with us ?

TOM : Yes—second class.

SIDNEY : Let him stop the bailiffs—Aaron is as timid as a girl. I'll go through here, and out by the grand entrance. Let in the Lamb, and——

TOM : I see.

SIDNEY : Quick ! [*Exit* TOM, *R. 1 E.*

O'SULL. : Daryl, is there any fighting to be done ?

MAC U. : Or any drinking ?

DR. M. : If so, we shall be most happy.

SIDNEY : No, no, thanks. Come with me—I've a treat for you.

OMNES : What ?

SIDNEY (*laughing*) : The chalybeate waters. [*Exeunt* OMNES *into house, L.*

Enter CHODD, JUN., *and* AARON, *R. 1 E.*

CHODD, JUN. : You saw him go in—arrest him. The chaise is ready—take him to the next station, and all's right. I'll stay and see him captured. (CHODD *in great triumph*).

AARON : Very good, shur—do it at vunsh.

[*Is going into the house, when the* LAMB *springs out*—AARON *staggers back—the* LAMB *stands in boxing attitude before the door*—TOM *and* SIX *or* EIGHT ROUGHS *enter by avenue, R.*).

LAMB (*with back half turned to audience*) : Now, then, where are *you* a shovin' to ?

AARON : I want to passh by.

LAMB : Then you can't.

AARON : Why not ?

LAMB (*doggedly*) : 'Cos I'm doorkeeper, and you haven't got a check.

AARON : Now, Lamb, dooty'sh dooty, and——

LAMB (*turning with face to audience, and bringing up the muscle of his right arm*) : Feel that !

AARON (*alarmed*) : Yesh, shur. (*feels it slightly*).

LAMB : You can't come in.

CHODD, JUN. (*crossing to* LAMB *fussily*) : Why not ?

LAMB (*looks at him, half contemptuously, half comically*) : 'Cos that sez I mustn't let you. Feel it ! (*taps muscle*).

CHODD, JUN. : Thank you, some other time. (*crossing, R.*)

[*The* ROUGHS *surround him, jeer, and prepare to hustle him*—TOM *mounts seat,* R.

TOM : Vote for Daryl !

LAMB (*making up to* AARON *in sparring attitude, who retreats in terror*) : Are yer movin'?

CHODD, JUN. : Do your duty. [ROUGHS *laugh.*

AARON : I can't—they are many, I am few. (*cheers without, R.*)

CHODD, JUN. (*losing his presence of mind*) : Particular business requires me at the hustings.

[*Goes off, R., midst jeers and laughter of* ROUGHS.

LAMB (*at same time advancing upon* AARON) : Are yer movin'.

AARON : Yesh, Mr. Lamb. (*by this time he has backed close to* TOM, *perched upon the seat, who bonnets him*)

TOM : Vote for Daryl !

[AARON *is hustled off, R.* 1 *E., by* MOB, *followed leisuredly by* LAMB.

TOM (*on chair*) : Remember, gentlemen, the officers of the law—the officers of the sheriff—are only in the execution of their duty. (*shouts and uproar without*) Don't offer any violence. (*shouts.*) Don't tear them limb from limb ! (*shouts followed by a loud shriek*—TOM *leaps from chair, dances down stage, and exit, R. U. E.*

Enter LADY PTARMIGANT *and* CHODD, SEN., *R.* 2 *E.*—LADY PTARMIGANT *is dressed in mauve*—CHODD *escorts her to house, L.*

CHODD, SEN. : But if he is absent from his post ?

LADY P. : His post must get on without him. Really, my dear Mr. Chodd, you must allow me to direct absolutely. If you wish your son to marry Miss Hetherington, now is the time—now or never.

[*Exits into house, L.*—CHODD, *exits R.* 1 *E.*

Enter CHODD, JUN. *and* MAUD, *dressed in mauve, R. U. E.*

CHODD, JUN. : Miss Hetherington, allow me to offer you a seat. (*she sits under tree, R.—aside*) Devilish awkward ! Lady Ptarmigant says " Strike while the iron's hot ; " but I want to be at the hustings. I've made my speech to the electors, and now I must do my courting. She looks awfully proud. I wish I could pay some fellow to do this for me. Miss Hetherington, a—a—a— I got the speech I spoke just now off by heart. I wish I'd got this written for me too. Miss Hetherington, I—I am emboldened by the—by what I have just been told by our esteemed correspondent, Lady Ptar—I mean by your amiable aunt. I—I— (*boldly*) I have a large fortune, and my prospects are bright and brilliant—bright and brilliant. I—I am of a respectable family, which has always paid its way. I have entered on a political career, which always pays its way ; and I mean some day to make my name famous. My lady has doubtless prepared you for the hon—I offer you my—my humble hand, and large, I may say colossal fortune.

MAUD (*L.*) : Mr. Chodd, I will be plain with you.

CHODD, JUN. (*R.*) : Impossible for Miss Hetherington to be plain.

MAUD : You offer me your hand : I will accept it.

CHODD, JUN. : Oh, joy ! Oh—— (*endeavouring to take her hand*)

MAUD : Please hear me out. On these conditions.

CHODD, JUN. : Pin money no object. Settle as much on you as you like.

MAUD : I will be your true and faithful wife—I will bear your name worthily ; but you must understand our union is a union of convenience.

CHODD, JUN. : Convenience !

MAUD : Yes ; that love has no part in it.

CHODD, JUN. : Miss Hetherington—may I say Maud—I love you—I adore you with my whole heart and fortune. (*aside*) I wonder how they're getting on at the hustings.

MAUD : I was saying, Mr. Chodd——

CHODD, JUN : Call me John—your own John ! (*seizing her hand—she shudders, and withdraws it*)

MAUD (*struggling with herself*) : I was saying that the affection which a wife should bring the man she has elected as——(*cheers without*)

SIDNEY (*speaking without*) : Electors of Springmead.

MAUD : We hardly know sufficient of each other to warrant——

SIDNEY (*without*) : I need not tell you who I am. (*cheers*—MAUD *trembles*)

MAUD : We are almost strangers.

SIDNEY : Nor what principles I have been reared in.

CHODD, JUN. : The name of Chodd, if humble, is at least wealthy.

SIDNEY : I am a Daryl ; and my politics those of the Daryls. (*cheers*)

CHODD, JUN. (*aside*) : This is awkward. (*to* MAUD) As to our being strangers——

SIDNEY : I am no stranger. (*cheers*) I have grown up to be a man among you. There are faces I see in the crowd I am addressing, men of my own age, whom I remember children. (*cheers*) There are faces among you who remember me when I was a boy. (*cheers*) In the political union between my family and Springmead, there is more than respect and sympathy, there is sentiment. (*cheers*)

CHODD, JUN. : Confound the fellow ! Dearest Miss Hetherington—Dearest Maud—you have deigned to say you will be mine.

SIDNEY : Why, if we continue to deserve your trust, plight your political faith to another ?

MAUD (*overcome*) : Mr. Chodd, I——

CHODD, JUN. : My own bright, particular Maud !

SIDNEY : Who is my opponent ?

TOM (*without, R.*) : Nobody. (*a loud laugh*)

SIDNEY : What is he ?

TOM : Not much. (*a roar of laughter*)

SIDNEY : I have no doubt he is honest and trustworthy, but why turn away an old servant to hire one you don't know ? (*cheers*) Why turn off an old love that you have tried and proved for a new one ? (*cheers*) I don't know what the gentleman's politics may be. (*laugh*) Or those of his family. (*roar of laughter*) I've tried to find out, but I can't. To paraphrase the ballad :—

> I've searched through Hansard, journals,
> Books, De Brett, and Burke, and Dodd,
> And my head—my head is aching,
> To find out the name of Chodd.

[*Loud laughter and three cheers*—MAUD *near fainting.*

CHODD, JUN. : I can't stand this : I must be off to the hustings, Miss Heth ! Oh ! she's fainting. What shall I do ? Lady Ptarmigant ! Oh, here she comes ! Waiter, a tumbler of number 2. [*Runs off, R. 2 E.*

SIDNEY (*without*) : And I confidently await the result which will place me at the head of the poll. (*cheers*)

Enter LORD *and* LADY PTARMIGANT, *from house, L.*—LADY PTARMIGANT *attends to* MAUD.

MAUD : 'Twas nothing—a slight faintness—an attack of——

LORD P. : An attack of Chodd, I think ! What a dreadful person my lady is, to be sure. (*aside—sits, L.*)

LADY P. (*to* MAUD) : Have you done it ?
MAUD : Yes.
LADY P. : And you are to be his wife ?
MAUD : Yes. (*cheers*)

Enter SIDNEY, O'SULLIVAN, MAC USQUEBAUGH *and* DOCTOR MAKVICZ, *R. 2 E.*

SIDNEY (*coming down, L.*) : Tom, I feel so excited—so delighted—so happy—so—(*sees* MAUD, *stops, takes his hat off*—MAUD *bows coldly*)—In my adversary's colours !
LADY P. (*R.*) : That fellow, Sidney !
MAUD (*C.—aside*) : It seems hard to see him there, and not to speak to him for the last time.

[*Is about to advance when* TOM *brings on* LITTLE MAUD, *R. U. E., dressed in magenta*—MAUD recedes—LORD PTARMIGANT *goes to sleep in garden seat, L.*

LADY P. : The tobacco man !
TOM (*down, L.*) : Ariadne !

[SIDNEY *kisses* LITTLE MAUD.

Enter CHODD, JUN., *R. U. E., and down, R.*

LADY P. (*with a withering glance at* SIDNEY) : Maud, my child, here's Mr. Chodd.

[CHODD, JUN., *crossing R. C., gives his arm to* MAUD—SIDNEY *stands with* LITTLE MAUD, *L. C.*—ALL *go off, R. U. E., except* LADY PTARMIGANT, SIDNEY, TOM *and* LORD PTARMIGANT.

SIDNEY (*L.*) : On his arm ! Well, I deserve it ! I am poor !
LADY P. (*R.*) : Mr. Daryl. [SIDNEY *bows.*
TOM (*L.*) : Ariadne is about to express her feelings ; I shall go ! [*Exit, R. U. E.*
SIDNEY : Lady Ptarmigant !
LADY P. : I cannot but express my opinion of your conduct. For a long time I have known you to be the associate of prize fighters, betting men, race horses, authors, and other such low persons ; but despite that, I thought you had some claims to be a gentleman.
SIDNEY : In what way have I forfeited Lady Ptarmigant's good opinion ?
LADY P. : In what, sir ? In daring to bring me, your kinswoman, and a lady—in daring to bring into the presence of the foolish girl you professed to love—that child—your illegitimate offspring ! [LORD PTARMIGANT *awakes.*
SIDNEY (*stung*) : Lady Ptarmigant, do you know who that child is ?
LADY P. : Perfectly ! (*With a sneer*)
SIDNEY : I think not. She is the lawful daughter of your dead, and only son, Charles !
LADY P. : What ?
SIDNEY : Two days before he sailed for the Crimea, he called at my chambers, and told me that he felt convinced he should never return. He told me too of his connection with a poor and humble girl, who would shortly become the mother of his child. I saw from his face that the bullet was cast that would destroy him, and I begged him to legitimatize one, who, though of his blood, might not bear his name. Like a brave fellow, a true gentleman, on the next day he married.
LADY P. : How disgraceful !
SIDNEY : Joined his regiment, and, as you know, fell at Balaclava.
LADY P. : My poor—poor boy.
SIDNEY : His death broke his wife's heart—she too died.
LADY P. : What a comfort !
SIDNEY : I placed the child with a good motherly woman, and I had intended for the sake of my old friend, Charley, to educate her, and to bring her to you, and say, take her, she is your lawful grandchild, and a lady *pur sang* ; love

her and be proud of her, for the sake of the gallant son, who galloped to death in the service of his country.

LADY P. (*affected*) : Sidney !

SIDNEY : I did not intend that you should know this for some time. I had some romantic notion of making it a reason for your consent to my marriage with —(LADY PTARMIGANT *takes* LITTLE MAUD) with Miss Hetherington—that is all over now. The ill opinion, with which you have lately pursued me, has forced this avowal from me.

LADY P. (*to child*) : My darling ! Ah ! my poor Charley's very image ! My poor boy ! my poor boy !

LORD P. (*who has been listening, advancing, L.*) : Sidney, let my son Charley's father thank you. You have acted like a kinsman and a Daryl ! (*affected*)

LADY P. : Sidney, forgive me !

SIDNEY (*C.*) : Pray forget it, Lady Ptarm——

LADY P. : I will take care that Miss Hetherington shall know——

SIDNEY (*hotly*) : What ! did she too suspect ! Lady Ptarmigant, it is my request —nay, if I have done anything to deserve your good opinion, my injunction—that Miss Hetherington is not informed of what has just passed. If she has thought that I could love another—she is free to her opinion ! (*goes up, and comes down, R., with the child*)

LORD P. : But *I* shall tell her.

LADY P. (*astonished*) : You ! (*aside*) Don't you think, under the circumstances, it would be better——

LORD P : I shall act as I think best.

LADY P. : Ferdinand ! (*authoritatively*)

LORD P. : Lady Ptarmigant, it is not often I speak, goodness knows ! but on a question that concerns my honour, and yours, I shall *not* be silent.

LADY P. (*C.*) : Ferdinand ! (*imploringly*)

LORD P. : Lady Ptarmigant, I am *awake*, and you will please to follow my instructions. (*crossing, C.*) What is my grand-daughter's name ?

L. MAUD : Maud.

LORD P. : Maud, Maud—is it Maud ! (*playfully*)

[LORD PTARMIGANT *lifts her in his arms, and is carrying her off.*

LADY P. : My lord ! consider—people are looking !

LORD P. : Let 'em look—they'll know I'm a *grandfather !*

[*Exit* LORD PTARMIGANT, *with* LITTLE MAUD *and* LADY PTARMIGANT, *R. U. E. avenue.*

TOM *runs on, R. U. E.*

TOM (*L.*) : It's all right, Sid. Three of Chodd's Committee have come over to us. They said that so long as a Daryl was not put up, they felt at liberty to support him, but now—(*seeing that* SIDNEY *is affected*) What's the matter ?

SIDNEY (*R.*) : Nothing.

TOM : Ah, that means love ! I hope to be able to persuade the majority of Chodd's Committee to resign ; and, if they resign, he must too, and we shall walk over the course. (SIDNEY *goes up and sits, L.—aside*) Cupid's carriage stops the way again. Confound that nasty, naughty, naked little boy ! I wonder if he'd do less mischief if they put him into knickerbockers.

[*Exit, R.* 1 *E.*

SIDNEY : Mr. Chodd shall not have Springmead.

Enter MAUD, *leading* LITTLE MAUD *by the hand, R. U. E.*—SIDNEY'S *face is buried in his hands on the table.*

MAUD (*kissing the child, then advancing slowly to* SIDNEY) : Sidney !

SIDNEY (*rising*) : Maud—Miss Hetherington !

L. MAUD : Uncle, this is my new aunt. She's my aunt and you're my uncle. You don't seem pleased to see each other though—ain't you ? Aunt, why don't you kiss uncle ?

MAUD (*R., after a pause*) : Sidney, I have to beg your forgiveness for the—the—mistake which——

SIDNEY (*L.*) : Pray don't mention it, Maud—Miss Hetherington. It is not of the——

MAUD (*R.*) : It is so hard to think ill of those we have known. [CHILD *goes up R.*

SIDNEY : I think that it must be very easy ! Let me take this opportunity, of apologising personally, as I have already done by letter, for my misconduct at the ball. I had heard that you were about to—to——

MAUD : Marry ! Then you were in error. Since then I have accepted Mr. Chodd. (*pause*)

SIDNEY : I congratulate you. (*turns his face aside*)

MAUD : You believed me to be false—believed it without enquiry !

SIDNEY : As you believed of me !

MAUD : Our mutual poverty prevented.

SIDNEY (*bursting out*) : Oh, yes, we are poor ! We are poor ! We loved each other—but we were poor ! We loved each other—but we couldn't take a house in a square ! We loved each other—but we couldn't keep a carriage ! We loved each other—but we had neither gold, purple, plate, nor mansion in the country ! You were right to leave me, and to marry a *gentleman*—rich in all these assurances of happiness !

MAUD : Sidney, you are cruel.

SIDNEY : I loved you, Maud ; loved you with my whole heart and soul since we played together as children, and you grew till I saw you a lovely blushing girl, and now—pshaw ! this is folly, sentiment, raving madness ! Let me wish you joy—let me hope you will be happy.

L. MAUD (*coming down. C.*) : Uncle, you mustn't make my new aunt cry. Go and make it up with her, and kiss her.

[LADY PTARMIGANT, LORD PTARMIGANT, *and* LORD CLOUDWRAYS *have entered during the last speech, R. U. E.*

MAUD : Farewell, Sidney ! (*holding out her hand*)

SIDNEY : Farewell !

LADY P. (*advancing, C.*) : Farewell ! What nonsense : two young people so fond of each other. Sidney—Maud, dear, you have my consent.

SIDNEY (*L. C., astonished*) : Lady Ptarmigant !

LADY P. (*R. C.*) : I always liked you, Sidney, though, I confess, I didn't always show it.

LORD P. (*L.*) : I can explain my lady's sudden conversion—at least, Cloudwrays can.

LORD C. (*R.*) : Well, Sid, I'm sorry to be the bearer of good news—I mean of ill news ; but your brother—poor Percy—he—a——

SIDNEY : Dead !

LORD C. : The news came by the mail to the Club, so as I'd nothing to do, I thought I'd come down to congratulate—I mean condole with you.

LORD P. : Bear up, Sidney, your brother's health was bad before he left us.

SIDNEY : First the son, and then the father.

MAUD (*L. C.*) : Sidney !

SIDNEY (*catching her hand*) : Maud !

MAUD : No, no—not now—you are rich, and I am promised.

LADY P. : Why, you wicked girl ; you wouldn't marry a man you didn't love, would you ? Where are your principles ? (LORD PTARMIGANT *sits on garden seat, L.*, with LITTLE MAUD)

MAUD : But—but—Mr. Chodd ?
LADY P. : What on earth consequence is Mr. Chodd ?

Enter CHODD, SEN., *and* CHODD, JUN., *avenue, R.*

CHODD, SEN. : My lady, it's all right, Johnny has been accepted !
[MAUD *goes up and sits, L. C.*—SIDNEY *and* LORD CLOUDWRAYS *also go up with her.*
LADY P. (*L.*) : By whom ?
CHODD, SEN. (*R.*) : By Miss Hetherington—by Maud !
LADY P. : Why, you must be dreaming, the election has turned your brain—my niece marry a Chodd !
CHODD, SEN. } My lady !
CHODD, JUN. }
LADY P. : Nothing of the sort : I was only joking, and thought you were, too. (*aside*) The impertinence of the lower classes in trying to ally themselves with us ! (*going up, L.*)
CHODD, JUN. : Guv.
CHODD, SEN. : Johnny !
CHODD, JUN. : We're done ! (*crosses, L.*)
[*Loud cheering. Enter* TOM, *R. U. E., who whispers and congratulates* SIDNEY. *Enter a* GENTLEMAN, *R. 1. E., who whispers to* CHODD, SEN. *condolingly and exit, R. 1. E.*
CHODD, SEN. (*R., shouting*) : Johnny !
CHODD, JUN. (*L.*) : Guv.
CHODD, SEN. : They say there's no hope, and advise us to withdraw from the contest. [ALL *congratulate* SIDNEY, *up stage.*
LADY P. : Sir Sidney Daryl, M.P., looks like old times. (*to* LORD PTARMIGANT) My lord, congratulate him.
LORD P. (*waking and shaking* CHODD, JUN. *by the hand*) : Receive my congratulations.
LADY P. : Oh ! it's the wrong man !
CHODD, SEN. (*R.*) : Mr. Stylus, I may thank you for this.
TOM (*R. C.*) : And yourself you may. I brought out your journal, engaged your staff, and you tried to throw me over. You've got your reward. Morning paper ! (*throws papers in the air*)

Enter AARON *with hat broken and head bound up, R. U. E.*

AARON (*C., to* SIDNEY) : Arresht you at the shoot of—— (CHODDS *rub their hands in triumph*)
TOM (*R. C.*) : Too late ! too late ! He's a member of Parliament.
[CHODD, JUN. *and* SEN. *turn into R. and L. corners.*
SIDNEY (*L. C., to* TOM) : I haven't taken the seat or the oaths yet.
TOM (*R. C.*) : They don't know that.
SIDNEY : We can settle it another way. (*taking out pocket book and looking at* CHODD, JUN.) Some time ago I was fortunate enough to win a large sum of money, this way if you please. (*goes up with* AARON, *and gives money, notes, &c.*)
CHODD, JUN. : Pays his own bills, which I'd bought up, with my money.
CHODD, SEN. (*crossing, L.*) : Then, Johnny, you won't get into society.
LADY P. (*coming down, R.*) : Never mind, Mr. Chodd, your son shall marry a lady.
CHODD, JUN. } Eh !
CHODD, SEN. }
LADY P. : I promise to introduce you to one of blue blood.
CHODD, SEN. : Blue blood.
CHODD, JUN. : Blue bl—— I'd rather have it the natural colour.

Cheers—Enter O'SULLIVAN *and* COMMITTEE, *R. U. E. Stage full. Church bells heard.*

O'SULL. (*R.*) : Sir Sidney Daryl we have heard the news. In our turn we have to inform you that your adversaries have retired from the contest, and you are Member for Springmead. (*cheers*) We, your committee, come to weep with you for the loss of a brother, to joy with you on your accession to a title and your hereditary honours. Your committee most respectfully beg to be introduced to Lady Daryl. (*with intention and Irish gallantry*)

[SIDNEY *shows* MAUD *the magenta ribbon—she places her hand in his.*

SIDNEY (*C.*) : Gentlemen, I thank you ; I cannot introduce you to Lady Daryl, for Lady Daryl does not yet exist. In the meantime I have permission to present you to Miss Hetherington.

TOM (*leaping on chair, R., and waving handkerchief*) : Three cheers for my lady !

[*All cheer—church bells—band plays* " Conquering Hero." GIRL *at window of house waves handkerchief and* CHILD *a stick with magenta streamer attached.* COUNTRYMEN, *&c. wave hats—band plays, &c.*

CURTAIN.

1890

JUDAH

(By HENRY ARTHUR JONES)

Both Henry Arthur Jones (b. 1851) and Arthur Wing Pinero (b. 1855) are happily still with us. It was their privilege to unite in the great wave that followed Tom Robertson's initial and heroic effort. They carried us far beyond the scope of his dreams and ambitions. They bring us to the threshold of the new era in English drama. On a sound foundation they built the problem play, the play designed to make a man think as well as to give him pleasurable sensations. In their dramaturgy, pleasurable sensations are perhaps the first consideration. There is much to be said for the point of view.

Judah, produced at the Shaftesbury Theatre on the 21st May 1890, was not to the taste of the conventional critics. Clement Scott, the faithful friend of the reformers of that period, stood almost alone in defending it. The sincerity of the central figure penetrated a region so unfamiliar as to make the older playgoers uncomfortable ; this was somehow felt to be against the rules. The same sincerity gives the play life to-day.

Henry Arthur Jones' successes are too numerous, and too well-known, to be here recorded. One of his few failures, *Michael and His Lost Angel*, is thought by some to represent the height of his achievement. Of his art, " G.B.S." of *The Saturday Review*, wrote, in a rare outburst of enthusiasm : " One of the great comforts of criticising the work of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones is that the critic can go straight to the subject-matter without troubling about the dramatic construction . . . (His) technical skill is taken as a matter of course. Nobody ever dreams of complimenting him about it ; we proceed direct to abusing his ideas." . . .

But we have no intention of abusing Mr. Jones' ideas.

JUDAH

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS.

Characters

JUDAH LLEWELLYN, *Minister of the Durfield Road Chapel, Beachampton*
THE EARL OF ASGARBY
PROFESSOR JOPP, F.R.S., etc.
MR. PRALL
JUXON PRALL
MR. DETHIC
MR. PAPWORTHY, *Mayor of Beachampton*
ROPER
MORSON
GRANGER
VASHTI DETHIC
LADY EVE (*Lord Asgarby's daughter*)
SOPHIE JOPP
MRS. PRALL

The whole of the action takes place at ASGARBY CASTLE, *near the city of Beachampton, in the present day.*

ACT I

SCENE.—*The Tapestry-room at* ASGARBY CASTLE. *A handsome apartment hung with copies of Raphael's cartoons in tapestry. The back is covered with a copy in tapestry of the cartoon of the healing of the paralytic at the gate of the Temple. Door up stage right. Fire-place down stage right. Windows opening upon garden up stage left.*

Discover LORD ASGARBY—*a very distinguished-looking man about sixty. He is writing at table.*

Enter ROPER, *announcing.*

ROPER : Mr. Papworthy !

Enter PAPWORTHY.

[*Exit* ROPER.

(LORD A. *rises.*)

PAP. : Excuse my taking the liberty, Lord Asgarby, but you being the chief pillar of Beachampton, I thought it my duty to ask your opinion upon the question of our Mr. Llewellyn and this young person.

Enter PROFESSOR JOPP *at window. A man about sixty, keen, alert, intellectual, bald, very high forehead, bright deep-set eyes, genial Voltaire type of face.*

JOPP : Am I in the way ?

LORD A. : Not at all, Jopp. (*Introduces.*) Mr. Papworthy. He wants to ask my advice about this young lady who is causing all this sensation in the city.

JOPP : This Miss Dethic ?

PAP. : Yes, sir. I have been connected with the Durfield Road Chapel since I was a boy, and it seems to me that our young minister, Mr. Llewellyn, is going too far when he declares in public his belief in the miracles that this Miss Dethic is said to work.

JOPP : You don't believe in miracles, Mr. Papworthy ?

PAP. : Not in England in the nineteenth century. Do you, sir ?

JOPP : No. I never believe in miracles that do not happen either in a remote century or a remote country.

PAP. : Quite so, sir ; and though of course I don't say they are impossible in Beachampton to-day, yet I think as mayor, and as head of one of the oldest establishments in the city, it is my duty to—to—ah—to—

JOPP : To discourage them as much as possible, eh ?

PAP. : Yes. And Lord Asgarby subscribing very largely to our cause, as he does to everything in Beachampton, I called to ask him whether in his opinion Mr. Llewellyn ought not to be removed.

JOPP : What for ? He is tremendously in earnest—the finest natural orator I ever listened to.

PAP. : You have heard him, sir ?

LORD A. : We all went last night. My daughter was deeply impressed, and wished to meet him.

PAP. : He's in Asgarby now, with Miss Dethic.

LORD A. : In the village ? Could you bring him here ?

PAP. : Certainly, my lord. (LORD A. *rings bell.*) I don't deny Mr. Llewellyn's extraordinary gifts, but it's a pity he's so infatuated with this girl. There are other members of the congregation—my own daughter, for instance—she did knit him a pair of slippers. However, there's no denying the wonderful power he has over the people.

JOPP : He seems to have received a good education.

PAP. : He was at our training-college for some years. All our ministers are trained there. But it isn't education with Mr. Llewellyn—it's born in him !

JOPP : Welsh, isn't he ?

PAP. : A Welsh father and Jewish mother.

JOPP : Celt and Jew ! Two good races ! Just the man to give England a new religion, or make her believe in her old one.

ROPER *enters.*

PAP. : I will try and find him, my lord.

LORD A. : Thank you. By the way, you needn't trouble the rate-payers about the Free Library for the city. I will bear the entire cost myself.

PAP. : My lord, you are too generous !

LORD A. : Generous ! What is the use of money to me ?

LADY EVE *enters—a girl of fifteen, with beautiful, hectic complexion, feverish, fidgety, with sudden alternate fits of languor and restless energy.* PAPWORTHY *bows very respectfully to her, and she comes to* LORD A. *He kisses her forehead.*

PAP. (*aside*) : Fifty thousand a year, and one dying child !

[*Exit.* ROPER *shows him off.*

LORD A. *watches* LADY EVE *constantly, with the greatest tenderness and solicitude.*

JOPP : Well, Lady Eve, how are you to-day ?

LADY E. : I am quite well. The doctors are all wrong. I mean to cheat them all and live.

[*Flings herself into an arm-chair, her fingers playing restlessly with a tassel.*

LORD A. : Live, dearest ? The doctors have never said otherwise.

LADY E. : No, but they think it. You needn't try to deceive me. I know what these journeys mean, from Torquay to Nice, from Nice to Algiers. (*She rises suddenly, goes to* JOPP *determinedly.* LORD A. *follows her, always with the greatest solicitude.*) Professor Jopp, I read your article in this month's *Modern Review*, on " The Scientific Conception of Truth."

JOPP : You read a great deal too much, Lady Eve.

LADY EVE : I read everything. (*Very pointedly.*) Do you always tell the truth yourself ?

JOPP (*a little taken aback ; after a short pause*) : Almost invariably.

LADY E. : Will you tell me the truth now ?

JOPP : Certainly.

LADY E. : How long shall I live ?

JOPP : Well, I'm not in practice now, you know.

LADY E. (*goes from him, pettishly, to chair at fireplace, and sits*) : Ah ! you all think I am afraid to die ! My uncle Jack dashed among the powder barrels at

Inkerman, though he knew it was certain death. I am no more a coward than he was. I can die !

LORD A. : But you said you were going to live. [*Going to her.*

LADY E. : So I am, if you'll let me have my own way ? (*With great eagerness.*) Will you ?

LORD A. : My dearest, if there is anything in this world that money can buy, or love can procure, you know it is yours. (*Tenderly.*) What is it ?

LADY E. : Professor Jopp will laugh.

JOPP (*seriously and tenderly*) : I couldn't laugh at anything that promised to bring health to you.

LADY E. : You laughed the other day.

JOPP : At what ?

LADY E. : At this Vashti Dethic. Yet she has made hundreds of cures in Spain.

JOPP. : In Spain.

LADY E. : And in America.

JOPP : In America.

LADY E. : And in England. Mr. Prall has written a book all about her cures and her fasting. (*Very confidently.*) I'm sure she could cure me. Father, you won't be angry ! Miss Dethic is staying at the Towers with Mrs. Prall, and I've written and asked them to come this afternoon.

LORD A. : That's right.

LADY E. : And may I ask her to stay here ?

LORD A. : Certainly, dear, if you wish. (JOPP *shrugs his shoulders.*) She is in the village with this Mr. Llewellyn.

LADY E. : Mr. Llewellyn—the minister we heard last night. I'll go and see if I can find her. (*Goes to window.* LORD A. *follows her.*) No, don't come. Oh ! If I could speak like him ! If I could do something ! It's action I want. This world is all for the strong. To do something, and then to die. (*In a very dreamy, musing tone.*) How sweet Death seems sometimes ! Like a kiss from an unknown lover ! He comes and touches you and says, " Don't you know me ? I have loved you all these years. This is our wedding-day. You must come with me. You must come." [*Exit at window.*

LORD A. (*has watched her with great pain. Comes down, sits at writing-table, head in hands, then bursts into tears*) : I can't bear it. My dear one ! My only one ! The last of us ! The end of our race ! To have our name written in every page of our country's history, and now to be blotted out. I have followed six of them to the grave, one after another, and now this last one is to be taken. I could buy up half the county, Jopp, and I can't buy a year's life for my only child. I'm worth nearly sixty thousand a year, and I'm poorer than the poorest labourer that can give blood and vigour to his race.

JOPP : My poor Asgarby !

LORD A. : You have changed your beliefs since we were at Oxford together. I haven't ! What comfort can your no-creed give me ? Is it just ?

JOPP : Yes. Your family has played a great part all through English history. It has lived its life, a long and honoured one. My dear Asgarby, when the day's work is done, and well done, why rebel because the night has come and the labourer must go home to his rest ?

LORD A. : But she hasn't lived her day. Must it be, Jopp ? I don't trust these doctors. They only tell me what they know I am longing to hear. Tell me the truth.

JOPP : With the greatest care, Lady Eve may live some years.

LORD A. : How many ?

JOPP : It is possible she may outlive you and me, but—

LORD A. : But ?—

JOPP : You mustn't build on it.

[*The two men stand with hands clasped for some moments.* SOPHIE JOPP's *voice heard off at window.*

SOPHIE (*off.*) : Decidedly—put the girl to a scientific test.

Enter SOPHIE JOPP *at window, in outdoor dress, a dogmatic, supercilious, incisive young lady, with eye-glass and short hair. She speaks in a metallic, confident voice ; a girl who could never blush. Goes to chair ; sits down.*

Enter at window JUXON PRALL, *a thin wizened, old young man, spectacles, sharp features ; knows everything—a young man of the most complete self-assurance. He has a peculiar finicking trick of speaking with the tips of the fingers of one hand playing on the tips of the other. Holds his head upon one side, as though he hadn't muscular strength enough to hold it upright.*

JUXON : How do you do, Asgarby ? How do you do, Jopp ? We've been watching this wonder-worker, Miss Dethic, go through her performance.

LORD A. : You don't share your father's belief in her ?

JUXON : My dear Lord Asgarby ! [*Shrugs his shoulders.*

LORD A. : But Mr. Prall gives scores of authenticated cases in his book.

JUXON (*with the loftiest contempt*) : My father's book ! You've read *that* ?

LORD A. : With the greatest interest. Why not ?

JUXON : Well, naturally I would not deprive my poor father of any small intellectual status that his various lucubrations have left him, but to *me* his book is simply the most deplorable farrago of unsound logic, sickly sentiment, and blatant ignorance that I have ever read. Eh, Miss Jopp ?

SOPHIE : The style is certainly flabby.

JUXON : Atrocious. Do you feel inclined to investigate this Miss Dethic's powers, Jopp ?

JOPP (*shakes his head*) : I have investigated too many of them. The exact point at which self-deception ends and the deception of other people begins, has ceased to interest me. I made up my mind when I exposed those rascally spiritualists last year, that I wouldn't waste any more time over such nonsense.

SOPHIE : Oh ! but this case does really present some very astonishing features.

JUXON : Quite out of the common. I have proposed a scientific test.

LORD A. : Ah ! What ?

JUXON : Miss Dethic only performs these wonderful cures after some weeks' fasting. She is locked in a room and remains in a kind of trance. To test if the fast is real, I have proposed that the key of the room should be handed over to me.

SOPHIE : Would it not be better, Mr. Prall, that you and I should take watches of equal duration ?

JUXON : I don't think so. I don't question your good faith ; but the experience of my entire life has convinced me that my own personal observation is the only instrument whose results are perfectly satisfying and convincing.

LORD A. : And did Miss Dethic refuse ?

JUXON : My mother objected on the score of propriety. I am extremely desirous not to say anything unfilial, but to *me* my poor mother presents the most alarming spectacle of all that is insufferable and prudish in the British matron. It is simply deplorable.

Enter ROPER, *announcing* MR. *and* MRS. PRALL. *During the following scene* JUXON *gazes at his father and mother with an air of benevolent pity, and occasionally exchanges glances and shrugs of the shoulder with* SOPHIE, *who reciprocates his feelings.*

Enter MR. *and* MRS. PRALL—MR. PRALL *carrying crutches.*

MRS. P. : Lord Asgarby, congratulate us. (*Shaking hands with* LORD A.) The most marvellous manifestations !

MR. P. : How do you do, Asgarby ? (*Shakes hands.*) To-day's results must silence the most obdurate.

JUXON : They will not silence me.

MR. P. (*looks at* JUXON *angrily ; says nothing. Turns to* LORD A.) : You remember old Benjamin Bandy ?

LORD A. : The lame man at the cross-roads ?

MR. P. : Yes. For the last twenty years he has done nothing but hobble round his garden on crutches.

MRS. P. : And swear horribly. And, as he had a remarkably powerful voice, all his neighbours for half a mile round were compelled to listen to him.

JUXON : Not necessarily.

MR. P. (*to* JUXON, *very loudly and angrily*) : It was impossible to avoid hearing him.

LORD A. : What about Benjamin Bandy ?

MR. P. : Miss Dethic has cured him.

JOPP : Of his bad language ?

MRS. P. : No, of his complications. He had various disorders.

MR. P. : He can walk, Lord Asgarby, as well as you and I. These are his crutches. (*Showing them to* JOPP.)

MRS. P. (*to* JOPP) : You can't deny the crutches.

JOPP (*examines the crutches very carefully through glasses ; turns them round upside down, assuming an air of conducting a profound examination and then delivers his verdict very magisterially*) : They *are* crutches.

[PRALL, *with a satisfied air, crosses to table and puts crutches on it.*

MRS. P. : And what have you to say to that ?

JOPP : That apparently Miss Dethic has set free an alarming quantity of bad language to perambulate the country, instead of confining it within the limited radius of half a mile of the cross-roads.

Enter ROPER, *announcing* MR. PAPWORTHY *and* MR. LLEWELLYN. *Enter* PAPWORTHY. *Enter* JUDAH LLEWELLYN, *about twenty-five, dark complexion, shaggy, clustering hair in thick curls over his forehead. Quick, nervous step ; glowing, enthusiastic manner. Slight Welsh accent which becomes more noticeable in excitement.*

PAP. : My lord, this is Mr. Llewellyn. If you'll excuse me, my lord—(*taking out watch*)—I have a meeting. [*Exit.*

JUDAH (*bows very slightly*) : You sent for me.

LORD A. : We had the pleasure of hearing you last evening. We were delighted.

JOPP : I have to speak in public occasionally. I should like to know the secret of your oratory.

JUDAH : I believe what I say.

JOPP : *I* believe what *I* say. There must be some other reason.

JUDAH : What do you speak about ?

JOPP : My last lecture was on tadpoles and lizards.

JUDAH : Mine was on the unseen world.

JOPP (*dryly*) : Ah !—there I can't follow you.

JUDAH : It does need wings.

JOPP : And I have only legs. Was that a personal experience of your own that you told us of last night ? Those mysterious voices—

JUDAH : Yes ; I hear them almost every day. I have heard them ever since I was a child and kept my father's sheep on the hills in Wales. You know I lived almost alone until I was nearly twenty. I saw no human being, sometimes spoke to no one, from one week to another.

JOPP : And you fancy that you hear a real voice at these times ?

JUDAH : It isn't fancy—I hear it as plainly as I hear yours. (JOPP *smiles.*) Why do you doubt me ? Is the spirit-world so far from you that you don't believe in it ? It's nearer to me than this earth I walk upon.

LORD A. : I understood that this Miss Vashti Dethic was with you, Mr. Llewellyn.

[*At the mention of her name* JUDAH'S *face shows intense interest.*

JUDAH : I left her in the village.

MRS. P. : I was bringing her here, but she would insist on trying her marvellous curative power on some poor people in the village.

MR. P. : Wonderful ! I am just bringing out a new edition of my book on her cures—the seventeenth !

JUXON : Perhaps, sir, you will correct a few of the gross inaccuracies that appear in the previous editions.

MR. P. (*terribly upset, with an outburst of impotent wrath*) : Juxon ! (*Suddenly recovers himself. Speaks in a tone of condescending sarcasm.*) I decline to argue with you, sir.

JUXON (*imperturbably*) : My dear father, I would not force you to such an unequal contest.

Enter ROPER, *announcing* MR. DETHIC. *Enter* MR. DETHIC, *a suave, furtive, sallow, oily man of about fifty with a touch of the manner of a second-rate platform orator.*

MR. P. : Lord Asgarby, may I present Mr. Dethic, the father of our distinguished guest ?

LORD A. : We are pleased to see you, Mr. Dethic.

DETHIC : I hope you'll excuse my intruding, my lord, but my poor child—

JUDAH : Miss Dethic is not ill ?

DETHIC : Merely exhausted. She is resting in the grounds for a few moments.

MRS. P. : And the young girl with the fits ?

DETHIC : Perfectly cured, and so grateful. Wanted to give us a testimonial on the spot.

MR. P. : What do you say to these occurrences, Professor ?

JOPP : I haven't witnessed them.

MR. P. : You don't deny them ?

JOPP. : We don't deny miracles nowadays, Mr. Prall—we explain them.

JUDAH : Explain !—what ?

JOPP : The perfectly natural means by which miracles are always accomplished.

JUDAH : You know the secrets of life and death, then ? You hold the keys of the grave ? Explain ? Explain to the mother the mystery of the love that gives a living child to her arms ! Explain to the husband what hand snatches back his wife from the gates of death ! Explain ? They do not need it. They hold their dear ones to their hearts—safe. They do not question—they love.

LORD A. (*who has listened eagerly*) : We hoped Miss Dethic would have been here.

JUDAH : Will you let me bring her to you ?

LORD A. : If you will be so kind.

JUDAH : I will fetch her. [*Exit at door.*

DETHIC (*comes up to* LORD A., *his manner oily, uneasy, underbred*) : My lord, may I express my overwhelming sense of the honour you have done me to welcome me under the hospitable roof of Asgarby Castle ?

LORD A. : We hear wonderful accounts of Miss Dethic's powers.

DETHIC : Not half the truth, my lord.

JOPP : So I should imagine !

DETHIC (*turns sharply round on* JOPP) : Sir !

JOPP : In placing the proportion of truth to rumour at one half, you have formed an unusually favourable estimate of human nature, Mr. Dethic.

DETHIC (*confused ; laughs slightly*) : Oh—ah ! Yes ! Possibly, sir, you have never met with any one possessing these extraordinary powers.

JOPP (*in the gravest, most matter-of-fact tone, looks* DETHIC *full in the face, and speaks without showing the least irony*) : Never, Mr. Dethic. I have in my little collection at home the liver-wing of a phœnix, the entire skeleton of a griffin in excellent preservation, and the only known specimen of the horn of a unicorn, but I have never met with any one possessed of supernatural powers.

DETHIC : Indeed ! [*Laughs ; rather confused.*

ROPER *enters rather suddenly.*

ROPER : I beg pardon, my lord. The young lady has fainted.

[MRS. P., LORD A., *and* MR. P. *go off, followed by* ROPER. JOPP *stands at fire-place.*

DETHIC (*to* JUXON, *who ignores him*) : My poor darling ! It's ever the same when she is labouring for the good of others.

Re-enter JUDAH, *bearing* VASHTI *in a swoon.* VASHTI *has a very pale, saintly, beautiful face. He carries her with the utmost tenderness, and shows great concern. He is followed into the room by* LORD A. *and the* PRALLS.

JUDAH (*brings her down stage*) : She is ill ! She is dying ! (*To* DETHIC.) You shall not let her waste her strength any more. She is killing herself. (*Places her on settee.*) Miss Dethic !

JOPP : I have some medical knowledge. Can I be of any use ?

DETHIC (*intercepts* JOPP) : Not at all. Pardon me ; she prefers to be left alone. (JOPP *turns away.*) My lord, will you be so kind as to leave her with me ?

LORD A. : By all means. You are sure there is no danger ?

DETHIC : Nothing serious ; it will soon pass off.

[SOPHIE *and* MRS. P. *go off at window.* PRALL *has been taking notes in a pocket-book.*

MR. P. : A few notes for my next edition.

JUXON : I must really beg you to correct those inaccuracies, sir.

[*Exeunt* JUXON *and* PRALL. LORD A. *beckons* JOPP *and goes off at window.*

JOPP (*to himself, as he crosses*) : Father—genus, cheat ; species, religious ; variety, bogus-miracle business. Daughter—hum ! [*Exit.*

[VASHTI *opens her eyes.*

JUDAH (*looking at her*) : You are better ?

VASHTI : Yes. How good you are to me !

JUDAH : You are trembling still—you can hardly breathe.

DETHIC : Mr. Llewellyn, my poor child will recover more quickly if she is left alone with me.

JUDAH : It is my fault. I have encouraged her to use these powers, and now her strength is failing.

VASHTI : No, I am better ; leave me for a few moments.

[JUDAH *gives her a look, then exit at window after the others. They watch him off.*

DETHIC : Splendid, my darling. I'm proud of you. By Jove, we're in clover at last ! The old fellow here is worth goodness knows how much a year, and throws it about as if it was pebbles, and the young lady that wrote to Mr. Prall is his only child. All the others have died, and he's ready to give his

head to keep her alive. Now, my dear, do play your cards well, and our fortunes are made for life.

VASHTI : I'll go no further.

DETHIC : What ?

VASHTI : I'm tired of it. I hate this deception. I'll have no more of it.

DETHIC : Hush now ! Take care, my angel girl, take care ! You surely won't refuse to cure the poor young lady ?

VASHTI : Cure her ?

DETHIC : Yes, darling. You do cure people, you know.

VASHTI : They get well—sometimes.

DETHIC : My darling, what more can any doctor in the country say of his patients ?

VASHTI : It's only the ignorant and uneducated who believe in me. They think I have some mysterious power.

DETHIC : So you have. Take my word for it, my darling, there's some sort of magnetic influence about you that you don't quite understand yourself.

VASHTI : Sometimes I think there is, but then again I doubt myself. You're sure I have this power—it is *I* who cure them ?

DETHIC : Quite sure, my darling. You couldn't have been successful in so many scores of cases if there hadn't been something in it.

VASHTI : Then let us trust to that alone, and give up this pretence of fasting.

DETHIC : You can't, my dear. We've always given out that the fasting is the secret of your power, and people look for it. The general public are such fools. They'll never let you do 'em good in a plain, honest, straightforward way. You're bound to deceive 'em for their own good. We must throw 'em the fasting in. Mr. Prall has written a book about it, and laid special stress upon it.

VASHTI : Mr. Prall is deceiving himself and his readers.

DETHIC : Just so, my dear. Mr. Prall is a fool—that's the reason he's been of such use to us. And his readers are fools—that's the reason his book has had so many editions. It's ungrateful to repine at Providence for having made the world so full of fools, when it's quite plain they are put here for our especial benefit.

VASHTI : If I should be found out, who would be the fool then ?

DETHIC : Found out ! Nonsense !

VASHTI : You might not be able to supply me with food.

DETHIC : My precious angel, you trust to your old father. I didn't spend twenty years in the conjuring business without keeping a trick or two up my sleeve in case of accident.

VASHTI : I will not do it. It's shameful ! It's wicked ! I would never have begun it if I had known it would come to this, but you led me on step by step, and now I hate myself. Oh ! what am I ?—what am I ? (*With bitter self-reproach ; then turns suddenly round on him.*) Make some excuse to these people. I will not stay to trick and lie to them.

DETHIC (*intercepting her and catching her hands, looking straight in her eyes*) : Oh yes, you will, my dear !

VASHTI (*very firm*) : I will not.

DETHIC : Oh yes, you will. (VASHTI *turns from him ; he drops her hands.*) What's the reason of this change, Vashti ? There's some reason for it. What is it ?

VASHTI (*after a pause*) : The people believe in me.

DETHIC : Well, don't you want them to believe in you ?

VASHTI (*softly*) : Mr. Llewellyn believes in me.

DETHIC : Mr. Llewellyn ? Oh-h-h ! It's Mr. Llewellyn, is it ?

VASHTI : I will not do it. (*Very determinedly.*)

DETHIC (*venomous and quiet*) : Look here, my girl. Either you stay on here, and act according to my instructions, and are rewarded with a happy and honoured competence for the rest of your life, or you confess yourself a fraud, disgrace your trusting old father, and let Mr. Llewellyn know exactly what you are, besides getting yourself lodgings inside Beachampton jail.

VASHTI (*frightened*) : Jail !

DETHIC : The palatial red-brick edifice overlooking the canal.

VASHTI (*very frightened*) : I have done nothing criminal, have I ?

DETHIC : Haven't you ? How about imposing on dear, kind, good Mr. and Mrs. Prall, and living on 'em, and obtaining money of 'em on false pretences ?

VASHTI : Obtaining money ?

DETHIC : I've borrowed a hundred pounds of Mr. Prall. (VASHTI *shows alarm.*) Oh, you've had your share. Everything you've got on came out of it.

VASHTI (*deeply ashamed*) : You told me he gave it to you.

DETHIC : So he did, so far as there's any chance of his getting it back. But up to the present he regards the transaction as a loan. (VASHTI *is overcome with shame.*) Come, Vashti, don't be a fool. You can't go back now. (JUDAH *enters at window.*) I was just trying to persuade her, Mr. Llewellyn, that it is her duty to stay here and cure this poor young lady if she can. I was asking her to remember what you said : " Squander your life to save it ; save it, and find that you have lost it after all." (*Turns to* VASHTI.) You will stay here, Vashti, won't you ? You'll stay ? [*Looks threateningly.*

VASHTI (*after a pause*) : Yes, I'll stay.

DETHIC : That's right, my dear. I'll tell his lordship.

[*Goes to window, and exit.*

JUDAH (*very much embarrassed*) : Miss Dethic.

VASHTI : Yes ? (*Looks at him.*) What is it, Mr. Llewellyn ?

JUDAH : I want to speak to you.

VASHTI (*pause*) : Why don't you speak ?

JUDAH : Because—I can't !

VASHTI : You can be eloquent enough when you choose.

JUDAH : I am afraid to speak to you. Your goodness, your purity, take my breath away.

[VASHTI *shows a stab of pain at deceiving him, then shows pleasure at his confession of admiration. Her face glows as he proceeds.*

JUDAH (*looking at her with the deepest reverence, approaching her*) : You are like the picture of the angel that my mother hung over my head when I was a child. I can't speak to you as I do to others. (*Breathless.*) I want to kneel and worship you.

VASHTI : How can you speak so ? You do not know me. You are mistaken in me. Oh, why do you think so well of me ! Can't you see that I have a thousand faults ? Indeed, indeed, I am no better than other women.

JUDAH : It is your goodness makes you say that.

VASHTI : I am not good.

JUDAH : How is it, then, that you have this strange power over evil ? What is it but your goodness that frightens disease from its hold ? See what you have done to-day ? But you fly from your own good deeds. You will not hear the blessings of those whom you have healed and comforted. I hear them. I treasure them. I know what they cost you. It is your own life and health you give to others. This afternoon you fainted. I want to ask you to spare yourself, to waste your strength no more.

VASHTI : I am better now—quite well. You would wish me stay here and try and do this young lady good ?

JUDAH : I would not have you injure your own health.
VASHTI : But if I promised you that this should be the last time,—that, succeed or fail, I will try no more,—would you not have me do it then ?
JUDAH : Yes, I would.
VASHTI : Then I will do this, and for your sake it shall be for the last time.
JUDAH : Thank you.
VASHTI : But oh ! Mr. Llewellyn, you must not think so well of me. You don't know me. I am not an angel, I am a *woman*.

Enter DETHIC *at window*.

DETHIC (*oily, balmy*) : Quite recovered, my precious ? (VASHTI *shows intense disgust at her father's tone*.) That's right. (*Calls off*.) My lord, my poor child is now perfectly restored.

Enter LORD A. *and* LADY E.

LADY E. (*excitedly, speaking as she enters*) : Where is she ? Introduce me ! Never mind, I'll introduce myself. (*Going to* VASHTI, *taking her hands*.) You are Vashti Dethic ? I have heard so much of you. Is it true you have this wonderful power ?

Enter JOPP *at window. He pauses, and looks at* DETHIC.

VASHTI : I think I have been the means of restoring some people to health.
LADY E. : Can you cure me ?
VASHTI : Will you let me try ?
LADY E. : Yes. There is something in the touch of your hand. I feel you have done me good already. You must stay with us now.
VASHTI : If Mrs. Prall can spare me.
LADY E. : She must ! (*Turns to* LORD A.) Then that's settled, isn't it ?
LORD A. : I shall be only too pleased—if convenient to Miss Dethic.
DETHIC : Quite, my lord. Quite, I assure you. [*Showing great satisfaction.*
LADY E. : I will go and tell Mrs. Prall we are going to rob her of you. I shall soon be well now.
LORD A. (*kisses her, shows great affection*) : My dearest !
LADY E. (*to* LORD A.) : Doesn't she look like a saint ? Perhaps she is one.
LORD A. : If she cures you she is. [*Exit* LADY EVE *at window*.
DETHIC (*after a little humming and hawing*) : My lord, do I understand that I am included in your lordship's kind invitation to Asgarby Castle ?
LORD A. : Certainly, Mr. Dethic.
DETHIC : Thank you, my lord. My dear child will lay down her life for Lady Eve, if necessary.
JOPP. : How can that be necessary ?
DETHIC : Well, you see, she is quite unable to perform these great cures without fasting for weeks, and she is like a dead creature afterwards.
JUDAH (*very emphatically to* VASHTI) : You shall not do it.
DETHIC : Of course we don't expect any reward. Still, if any trifling way of showing your gratitude should suggest itself—
[VASHTI *rises as if to stop* DETHIC.
LORD A. : If your daughter is the means of benefiting Lady Eve, there is nothing you can ask me that I will not readily give you.
VASHTI (*emphatically*) : I will take nothing.
LORD A. : I shall insist on making some return. There is surely something that you wish for ?
VASHTI : No nothing. (*Glancing at* JUDAH.) Yes, there is something.

LORD A. : What is it ?

VASHTI : May I mention it to you alone ?

LORD A. : Certainly. [*Taking her down stage.*

VASHTI : You have heard Mr. Llewellyn. He is spending all his life in doing good. You do not know how great a work he is doing. If Lady Eve is well in a year from now, will you build him a new church, a place worthy of him and the truths he speaks ? That is the only thing I will take from you.

LORD A. : If my child's life is spared, in memory of her restoration I will raise a monument ; it shall be the most beautiful church in Beachampton, and I will endow the minister with any income that you may ask.

VASHTI : Thank you ! Thank you with all my heart. You will not let him know. He wouldn't accept it.

LORD A. : He shall not know.

JOPP : May I ask, Miss Dethic, what is the precise nature of the cure you propose to work upon Lady Eve ?

VASHTI : That is my secret.

JOPP : Mr. Llewellyn, perhaps you can explain Miss Dethic's method ?

JUDAH : Miss Dethic fasts for several days, and a strange unearthly power comes to her, which gives her strength not her own, to convey to those whom she desires to heal.

JOPP : I don't quite follow the operation. So far from giving strength, any lengthened period of fasting must weaken.

JUDAH : It weakens the body, but it gives beauty and strength to the spirit. (JOPP *shakes his head.*) Why should it seem strange to you ? Can you not see that Miss Dethic is not as others ?

JOPP : Evidently. (*To* DETHIC.) Does she abstain from all kinds of food ?

DETHIC : Absolutely. [JOPP *whistles incredulously.*

VASHTI : You do not believe that I fast ?

JOPP : My dear young lady, I always believe what's told me.

DETHIC : But you whistled !

JOPP : Yes, I did whistle. [*Pause.*

JUDAH : Do you deny her gifts ?

JOPP : I have no opportunity of judging.

JUDAH : Inquire of those whom she has cured. They can testify to her powers.

JOPP : Fifteen years ago, sir, I analysed a patent pill. It was composed of harmless, drastic, and poisonous drugs in about equal proportions. The patentee had made a fortune out of it, and thousands of his victims had given him testimonials.

JUDAH : Well ?

JOPP : Since then the patentee has made another fortune, and a thousand more victims have given him testimonials.

JUDAH : Miss Dethic has submitted herself to every proof that can be offered to her.

JOPP : Not to mine.

[*Slight pause.* JUDAH *looks at* VASHTI, *and makes an action as if asking her to speak.*

VASHTI (*comes down to* JOPP) : Will you put me to your proof ?

JOPP (*rises very quietly*) : Is it a challenge ?

VASHTI : Yes, if you please.

JOPP : Um ! (*Taking* LORD A. *down stage.*) You mean this young lady to remain at the Castle ?

LORD A. : Yes ; Eve wishes it, and I wish it.

JOPP : And it is with your consent that she treats Lady Eve in some mysterious, occult way ?

LORD A. : If you had but one child, and you loved her as I love Eve, you would listen to every quack and charlatan that promised to give her a few months' life.

JOPP : But your physicians ?

LORD A. : I've no faith in them. They gave me hopes of the others to the very last, and they all died. Do as you please ; I leave this matter in your hands.

JOPP : You wish me to act for you ?

LORD A. : Yes, only, whatever you do, let Eve have her own way in everything.

JOPP (*goes to* VASHTI) : You propose to cure Lady Eve in your usual manner—by fasting ?

VASHTI : Yes.

JOPP : You are willing for me to test the reality of your fast ?

VASHTI : Have I not said so ?

JOPP : You allow me to impose my own conditions ?

VASHTI : Impose what conditions you please.

DETHIC : At the same time I must warn you that a habit of doubting, an atmosphere of unbelief, does very materially interfere with a—a—

JOPP : With the success of miracles. Yes, I've noticed that. Asgarby, are the rooms in the old keep, the tower-rooms, occupied now ?

LORD A. : No, they remain as they were in my father's time.

JOPP : May I use them ?

LORD A. : Certainly.

JOPP : Thank you. (*To* VASHTI.) There are three very delightful rooms in the old keep. They are quite modern. The late Lord Asgarby had them fitted up for his scientific library. Have they been occupied recently ?

[DETHIC *and* VASHTI *show keen attention.*

LORD A. : Yes, when we were in Algiers last year, Roper lived in the keep, and the jewels were kept there, so I had a new safety lock put on the outer door.

JOPP : How many keys are there to that lock ?

LORD A. : Only one.

JOPP : Only one ! That will do ! (*To* VASHTI.) I shall confide you to my daughter. I shall give her that key, and she will take care that you have all the liberty consistent with—consistent with our watching you most thoroughly.

VASHTI : I may see my father sometimes ?

[JOPP *looks curiously at* DETHIC, *who tries to look sublimely unconcerned, but fails, shuffles, and looks rather uncomfortable.*

JOPP (*after having taken stock of* DETHIC *for some time*) : H'-m-m ! Well, perhaps sometimes.

DETHIC : It's of no consequence.

JOPP : And we begin, shall we say, to-morrow morning ?

VASHTI : This afternoon—at once.

JOPP (*to himself*) : Now is that girl really humbugging herself—or is she trying to humbug me ? I'll give myself the benefit of the doubt.

Enter from window LADY EVE *with* MRS. PRALL, *followed by* PRALL.

LADY E. (*excited, restless, flies to* VASHTI) : Miss Dethic, Mrs. Prall says you can stay with me from now, so you are my prisoner.

JOPP : Excuse me, Lady Eve, for the next three weeks Miss Dethic is my prisoner.

LADY E. : What do you mean ?

JOPP : Miss Dethic invariably fasts before curing her patients, and as she wishes us to be quite sure that her fasting is genuine, she has kindly asked me to put her to the test.

JUXON : Allow me to suggest, Jopp, that my test would be—

JOPP : Thank you, Mr. Prall. I shall employ my own test, and I am pretty certain about the result.

JUDAH : Won't you wait until you've obtained the result ?

JOPP : You're right. I spoke too soon.

DETHIC : Quite so. The proof of the pudding is in the eating.

JOPP : Pardon me. The proof of the pudding is in the digestion.

LADY E. : But I may see Miss Dethic ?

JOPP : Certainly, as often as you wish.

VASHTI : As you are to be my jailer, perhaps you will kindly tell me your name.

JOPP : My name ? (*A sudden monosyllable like the effect of a little pistol shot.*) Jopp !

DETHIC : Jopp ! (*Shows a sudden shock of surprise, as though he were shot, but quickly recovers.*)

VASHTI (*looks at* JOPP. *By an immense effort does not betray herself. Very faintly*) : Professor Jopp ?

JOPP : You've heard of me.

VASHTI : The Professor Jopp who exposed the spiritualists last year ?

JOPP : The same Professor Jopp.

DETHIC (*having perfectly recovered, comes down to* JOPP *and offers hand*) : My dear sir, let me shake you by the hand ; I'm proud to think my dear child has an opportunity of convincing the world-renowned Professor Jopp of her extraordinary powers.

JOPP (*takes no notice of his proffered hand*) : That's exactly what my spiritualist friend said to me last year. Poor beggar ! I signed a petition to the Home Secretary the other day to get him out of jail.

VASHTI : You sent him to jail ?

JOPP : No ; his own cleverness did that. I'm trying to get him out.

(VASHTI *looks frightened at him.*)

JOPP : What's the matter ?

VASHTI : Nothing—nothing !

JOPP : You still agree to submit to my test ?

VASHTI : Yes, yes—have I not said yes ? Put me to whatever test you please.

JUDAH : You hear, sir ! Miss Dethic is in your hands ! Try her ! Lay snares ! Set traps for her ! You have no juggling trickster to deal with now ! The power she serves stands ready to vouch for her, and your own lips shall be the witness of her truth and goodness to all the world.

CURTAIN.

ACT II

SCENE.—*The conservatory and terrace. A conservatory outside the castle, opening on to the terrace, which runs along back of stage, and shows a flight of old stone steps with a crumbling wall on each side, covered with ivy, and overhung with the tops of the trees ; a suggestion of considerable depth below. The steps lead up to the old castle keep. A doorway with a window over it. Beside the window a stone seat cut deeply into the wall, with steps leading on to the ramparts. This seat is large enough to conceal a man. Bright lamp in the conservatory, with wicker chairs and table on stage. A flood of summer moonlight on the old keep. Door opening from rooms in the castle. A light burning in window at the gate tower. An old Norman arch, ivy-covered, with door on right of stage. Piano is being played off stage and some one is singing ; this at suitable intervals during the act until* LADY EVE'S *entrance. When curtain rises* JUDAH *comes from warder's seat in recess to top of the steps ; looks up at window of keep ; then after a pause he sees* DETHIC. *He then retires into the recess, and is hidden.*

Enter DETHIC *along terrace in evening dress, as if just coming from dinner. He enters very cautiously, looking behind him to see if he is followed. Creeps cautiously on to terrace and looks up at the keep ; whistles up towards gate-tower as if desirous of attracting the attention of some one within.*

DETHIC (*on terrace at bottom of the keep steps. Looks cautiously round, takes out a very large new key from pocket*) : They're all pretty safe : the men in the dining-room, the ladies in the drawing-room. I've a good mind to risk it. (*As if carelessly, but really looking all round to see if he is observed, opens the Norman gateway door ; looks out ; shuts it. Is about to go up steps, his back being towards the left.*)

SOPHIE, *in evening dress, enters through conservatory.*

DETHIC (*turns round, confused*) : Er—you've left the drawing-room rather quickly, Miss Jopp !

SOPHIE : You've left the dining-room *very* quickly, Mr. Dethic.

DETHIC : Yes. I'm so fond of nature. Now that scene ! (*Flourishing his right hand over the moonlit landscape, and calling* SOPHIE's *attention to it, while his left hand is putting the large key into his coat-tail pocket. He is standing with his back to audience, so this action is very distinct.*) To me there is something very sweetly mysterious about all that.

[*He has secreted the key.*

SOPHIE : The most sweetly mysterious thing to me, Mr. Dethic, is that your daughter should have looked so well without food until a few days ago.

DETHIC : Ah, you see, Miss Jopp, we have stood the ordeal and come out unscathed.

SOPHIE : There are three days longer yet !

DETHIC : But eighteen days have gone by without one morsel to her lips.

SOPHIE (*stares straight at him*) : Eh, Mr. Dethic ?

DETHIC : You've kept the strictest watch over her all day. You've locked her up there all night, and you've never allowed the key of the tower rooms to pass for a moment out of your possession.

SOPHIE : No.

DETHIC : You have it now ?

SOPHIE (*produces from pocket a key exactly the same in shape as the one* DETHIC *has put into his*) : There it is.

[*Holds it up so that the audience can distinctly see the likeness between the keys.*

DETHIC : With that key in your possession you cannot entertain the least suspicion of our good faith.

SOPHIE : You see the window to the tower-room ?

[*Pointing up to the window which is lighted.*

DETHIC : Yes. The room where my dear child is imprisoned.

SOPHIE : That window was nailed up by my father's orders.

DETHIC : So that no food could possibly come through that way.

SOPHIE : Just so. Except that last Saturday I discovered that one of those little panes would take out, Mr. Dethic.

DETHIC : You don't say so ? But you can't suppose that food could be conveyed through one of those panes at that distance ? It's— it's really too absurd.

SOPHIE : It is absurd ; yet, absurd as it is, your daughter's health and spirits, which had kept up precisely as if she were being fed, declined from the very day that my father and I had a wire-gauze put over the window, Mr. Dethic.

DETHIC (*affecting astonishment*) : A wire-gauze !

SOPHIE : You hadn't noticed, perhaps.

DETHIC (*telling a good, solid lie*) : No.

SOPHIE : Strange ! And what is also strange is that since last Saturday your daughter has shown every symptom of starving.

[*Accidentally raises her voice a little, and speaks the word in such a tone that it can be heard by* JUDAH.

DETHIC : Starving !

SOPHIE (*in an unconcerned tone*) : Yes ; absurd, isn't it ? I'm just going to her.

DETHIC : Shall we escort her to the drawing-room ? Yes, I think we will !

[*With great eagerness, going towards* SOPHIE.

SOPHIE : No, I think we won't ! (DETHIC's *face falls very much*). At least not till my father comes from the dining-room. But Miss Dethic can walk along the terrace here, if—

DETHIC (*again delighted*) : Yes, if—

SOPHIE : If you'll be good enough to keep at the other end of it.

DETHIC (*again shows great disappointment*) : Oh, by all means. (SOPHIE *goes up steps —takes out her key.*) Oh, you duck ! [*Shakes his fist at her as she goes up steps.*

SOPHIE (*suddenly turns round ; nearly catches him in his threatening attitude. He drops it, tries to look unconcerned*) : Eh ?

DETHIC : Eh ?

SOPHIE : You spoke ?

DETHIC : No, no ; merely thought out loud. The dining-room windows are open, I see. I'll rejoin his lordship.

[SOPHIE *goes to the top of steps and opens the keep door.* DETHIC *makes a grimace at her and goes off along terrace.*

SOPHIE (*calling*) : Miss Dethic ! (VASHTI *comes to the keep door. A marked difference from the last act ; very haggard and weak, but with an expression of fixed endurance.* JUDAH *looks down from the warder's seat and listens.*) I hope you are better.

VASHTI (*at top of steps*) : I am quite well. Why do you always ask so anxiously after me ?

SOPHIE : I was afraid you might not be able to hold out three days longer.

VASHTI : You needn't fear.

SOPHIE : Would you like to walk on the terrace for a little while ?

VASHTI : Yes. (*Comes down. With forced cheerfulness.*) What a glorious night ! I could dance ! I could sing !

[*Runs quickly past* SOPHIE *with affected gaiety. Stops exhausted at bottom.*

SOPHIE : Ah ! You're playing a very foolish game.

VASHTI : I'm playing no game, except with death, for dear Lady Eve's life, and I shall win. (SOPHIE *shrugs her shoulders.*) You think I'm cheating you.

SOPHIE : No, I think you are cheating yourself. I shall be at the end of the terrace with your father, so you are quite free for the time.

[*Exit along terrace after* DETHIC. VASHTI *watches her off.* JUDAH *watches her also, and comes down steps gradually.*

VASHTI (*sinks into seat*) : Why doesn't my father bring me something ? If there were any berries—anything to stop these wolves that gnaw me ! Why shouldn't I give in ? And let Mr. Llewellyn know me for what I am ? No, I dare not ! I'll starve to death before he shall think me a cheat. Besides, am I a cheat ? I do not willingly deceive them.

JUDAH (*has come down steps behind her*) : Miss Dethic.

VASHTI (*turning with great surprise*) : Mr. Llewellyn ! How did you get here ?

JUDAH : I climed up from the moat.

VASHTI : From the moat ? (*Looks over the parapet ; shudders.*) How could you do such a dangerous thing ? You might have been killed.

JUDAH : You forget ; I was a shepherd all my youth. Before I was twelve I climbed the side of a mountain three times as high as this for a bird's nest.

VASHTI : Three times as high as this !

JUDAH : I was dared to do it. I brought the young ones down to the ground, and when I heard the mother crying for them, I climbed up again and put them back in the nest.

VASHTI (*again looking down*) : It makes me giddy to look down. Why have you come here ?

JUDAH : To be near you. I've been here every night since you have been in the castle.

VASHTI : Every night ?

JUDAH : Yes. I couldn't keep away.

VASHTI : You haven't seen—no one has seen you ?

JUDAH : No, I think not. They all sleep on the other side of the house ; and look—(*pointing up to the warder's seat*)—that seat in the hollow in the wall yonder seems to have been built on purpose that I might watch over you.

[*Comes down on to terrace.*

VASHTI : Lady Eve told me it was the warder's place in the olden times ; that stone seat was his bed.

JUDAH : It has been mine. (*Comes to her.* JOPP *enters into conservatory. Comes in carelessly from dinner. Stops suddenly and listens.*) I've stayed here half the night praying that strength might be given you to finish your task. In three days your trial will be over ; you will have wrestled for Lady Eve's life, and you will have conquered. I heard that girl taunt you just now. She doesn't believe in you.

VASHTI : But you believe in me.

JUDAH : You know I do. You know I have never doubted you.

JOPP (*has listened. Shown satisfaction*) : My young Welshman is honest. [*Exit.*

VASHTI : Thank you, thank you, Mr. Llewellyn, with all my heart. You don't know how those words help me.

JUDAH (*approaching her*) : Help you ! I help you ! Oh, you're above me, like heaven itself. But hear me. I must tell you—I love you !

VASHTI : Mr. Llewellyn, say no more.

JUDAH : I love you. Forgive my daring to say it. I'm mad to speak of human love to you. You're scarcely of this world at all. Oh ! but I love you, I love you ! From the first moment I saw you, when the poor woman tried to thank you for the health you had given her, and your face turned to her like an angel's in your pity, I have loved you. You have been the secret spring of all my power. When I speak to the people, it is your voice that speaks through me. Your love is a flame on my tongue. All the world is transfigured because you are in it. When I walk along the streets all the men and women seem to be smitten with your beauty. There's nothing common or mean or wicked anywhere : everything is good and bright and pure. Your presence makes all the earth beautiful and sacred, and your goodness is like your beauty, it spreads goodness all round you, as your beauty spreads beauty. You make me half divine. I love you, I love you ! [*Has sunk on his knees.*

VASHTI (*her face has shown alternate pain and pleasure. She speaks very quietly*) : If I were not good—if I were wicked ?

JUDAH : You cannot be other than yourself.

VASHTI : But would you love me, whatever I was ? Satisfy my woman's curiosity —would you love me if I were *not* good ?

JUDAH : If you were not good it would not be you. (*Looking at her closely.*) What do you mean ? [*Pause.*

VASHTI : Nothing. I only asked out of curiosity. You must go. Miss Jopp will be coming soon. Good-night.

JUDAH : You are not offended ?

VASHTI (*very calm, without showing any trace of feeling*) : Offended !—no. Oh, please say no more.

JUDAH (*after a pause of pain*) : I will not—but I am as you are—something apart from other men and women. All my life has been different from others. Till six years ago I never had any companions but the hills and my father's cattle. Till I saw you I had never known what the love of man for woman was.

VASHTI : You have never loved any one before ?

JUDAH : Never. To-night I have spoken the only words of love that I shall ever speak. (*Her face glows with delight.*) No woman will ever again hear me say that I love her.

VASHTI (*with great delight*) : Are you sure of that ?

JUDAH : Quite sure. It is not possible for me to love again.

VASHTI : Hark ! Some one's coming. You must go. Quick !

[JUDAH *runs up steps ; then gets over the parapet.* VASHTI *follows to top of steps.*

JUDAH (*descending the wall of the moat*) : Good-bye ! Give me that handkerchief you wear.

[*She takes the handkerchief from her neck and throws it to him. He catches it.* VASHTI *leans over parapet.*

VASHTI : Take care, take care ! (*He goes down ; disappears.*) Oh, if he were killed I would dash myself over too, and die with him ! (*Looks again ; whispers down.*) Are you safe ?

JUDAH (*below*) : Quite ; do not fear.

VASHTI : If I had the courage to tell him ! If he could know the truth of me, and yet love me ! I will. I *will* tell him ; and yet—I dare not. Oh, if you knew how it breaks my heart to deceive you !

[DETHIC, *with cigar lighted, saunters on furtively along terrace.* VASHTI *is bending over parapet.*

DETHIC (*in a loud whisper*) : Vashti !

VASHTI (*turns round*) : Bring me some food ; I'm perishing with hunger.

DETHIC : By and by. I've been to London, and Tozer——

VASHTI : Hush !

SOPHIE *enters along terrace, and overhears* DETHIC's *last words.* DETHIC *is confused.*

DETHIC (*going on*) : Yes, I saw Tozer, and he said—— [*Sees* SOPHIE ; *stops.*

SOPHIE (*to* DETHIC) : Pray don't let me interrupt Mr. Tozer's message.

DETHIC (*confused*) : Oh, Tozer said nothing of importance——

SOPHIE : Ah ! A member of Parliament possibly, or a popular preacher. Will you come with me into the drawing-room, Miss Dethic, or do you prefer being alone ?

VASHTI (*at top of steps*) : I would rather be alone.

SOPHIE : You are sure you won't take any food ?

[DETHIC *signs to her to say No, unseen by* SOPHIE.

VASHTI : I do not need it.

[*Pale, fixed, determined. Goes in to keep gateway.* SOPHIE *shrugs her shoulders. Goes up steps to fasten the gate.*

DETHIC : Do you hear that ? This is a glorious triumph for us.

SOPHIE (*turns on step, fixing him*) : Ah, *you* have dined ; your daughter *hasn't.*

DETHIC (*going off*) : If you don't come to some bad end it will be a pity.

[*Exit along terrace.* SOPHIE *comes down, having locked door.*

JUXON PRALL *enters through conservatory, in a towering rage.*

JUXON (*throws book on table*) : Really, it's most lamentable !

[*Goes up stage ; leans on wall.*

SOPHIE : What is ?

JUXON : For the past six years I have endeavoured to instil into my poor dear mother's mind the merest elements of logic. Will you believe me, Miss Jopp, that she fails to grasp the necessary consequence in the simplest syllogism ?

SOPHIE : How strange it is, Mr. Juxon, that people like your parents should possess such a gifted son as you !

JUXON : It is one of the freaks of heredity. My brother James is not gifted. When I think of poor James, I am ashamed of my attainments.

SOPHIE : Why ?

JUXON : James being quite a fool, I feel that I have unintentionally deprived him of his intellectual birthright.

SOPHIE : You ought to feel grateful for your own extraordinary endowments.

JUXON (*approaching her*) : Then you—you really have the penetration, Miss Jopp, to see that my acquirements are—if I may say so without egoism—not quite of the common order ?

[*He somehow gets her hand, and continues during the scene nursing it between both of his in a seesaw way, moving her hand between his up and down about four inches below his chin, and using them to emphasise his discourse occasionally.*

SOPHIE : I never met with any one quite so congenial to me.

JUXON : Really—really—Miss Jopp, your mind, though necessarily possessing some feminine limitations, is one of the most philosophic I have ever met. In fact, for some time past—ever since we attended those lectures by Professor Dobney last season—

SOPHIE : On mental pathology ; very interesting, but Dobney is quite wrong in his deductions.

JUXON : Decidedly Dobney is wrong—deplorably wrong. Dobney is an insufferable, self-satisfied prig. I shall be compelled to tell Dobney my opinion of him one of these days. (*Pause.*) But—we'll leave Dobney for the time, and, as I was saying—as I was sayin—— [*Hesitates ; gets a little confused.*

SOPHIE (*helping him*) : Shall we sit down ?

JUXON (*looks round*) : No ; no, I don't think so. I think I can formulate my thoughts better standing. You'll permit me to speak quite frankly ?

SOPHIE : Do so ; I wish it.

JUXON : In approaching the really momentous subject of marriage—(*pause*). Have I made it plain to you that I am about to suggest that we should become united for life ?

SOPHIE (*unembarrassed*) : I gathered as much.

JUXON : Thank you. I have considered the matter very carefully, and—you fully understand, do you not, that I am now making you a definite offer of marriage ?

SOPHIE (*quite unembarrassed*) : Oh yes. And I may say frankly, I am disposed to accept you—under certain conditions.

JUXON : Pecuniary, I suppose ? You are aware I am quite dependent upon my father. I cannot truthfully affirm that my poor father is of the slightest use in the world, and yet, so far as I can judge, there is very little prospect of his immediately retiring from it. Not that I wish him to do so ; still, it would simplify matters. However, as I am one of his only two children, I suppose he will make some provision for me.

SOPHIE : My objections were not pecuniary, but physiological.

JUXON : Very necessary ! Extremely necessary ! How sensible of you ! The neglect of the simplest physiological laws is simply deplorable. But, my dear Miss Jopp, my physical development, though somewhat retarded by my great mental exertions, is in the most satisfactory state.

SOPHIE : You had a bad cough last winter.

JUXON : Nothing, nothing, I assure you. (*Strikes his chest twice with* SOPHIE's *hand. Coughs.*) My lungs are organically sound. In fact, for a man of medium height and build, my whole frame is unusually vigorous and elastic. However, I would, of course, insure my life ; and it might perhaps be some satisfaction to you if I were to bring you the certificate from the Insurance Society.

SOPHIE : If you don't mind.

JUXON : Not at all. Then I suppose we may consider the matter settled.

SOPHIE (*unmoved*) : Quite so—so far as I am concerned.

JUXON : There's nothing else to discuss ?

SOPHIE : No, not that I remember.

[*Long pause. He retains her hand; is about to raise it to his lips, then is undecided whether he should kiss her face. She appears absolutely indifferent. He hesitates between her lips and her hand ; finally raises her hand to his lips, kisses it rather gingerly, drops it suddenly.* SOPHIE *goes down right.* JUXON *goes to table, takes his book, and returns before speaking.*

(*Pause.*)

JUXON : I really think we may congratulate ourselves.

SOPHIE : I wonder where everybody is.

JUXON : I trust you don't feel dull.

SOPHIE (*quickly*) : Not at all.

JUXON : I'm glad of that. (*Takes her hand as before.*) We might perhaps now sit down for a while. Shall we ?

SOPHIE : Yes. (*They sit.*) How quickly we came to a perfect understanding !

JUXON : Yes. (*Pauses.*) I do really think we may congratulate ourselves.

SOPHIE : I think so.

JOPP *and* PRALL *come into conservatory smoking, and stand talking.*

JUXON : Our fathers—there's no necessity to mention our decision to them at present.

SOPHIE (*after a pause of consideration*) : No, I should say not. Marriage being a purely personal matter——

JUXON : Quite so.

SOPHIE : It concerns ourselves only.

JUXON : Precisely. I shall, of course, inform my poor father and mother before we marry.

SOPHIE : Yes. I may possibly tell my father, but he'll not interfere ; he's far too sensible.

JUXON : I wish I could say the same of mine.

JOPP (*saunters on to terrace*) : Oh, here you are. How's our prisoner ?

SOPHIE : Hungry. Mr. Dethic seems most anxious to speak to her.

JOPP : She has already had one visitor.

SOPHIE : Who ?

JOPP : That strange young minister, Mr. Llewellyn, has been here. I heard him speak to her a few minutes ago.

SOPHIE : He may have brought her food.

JOPP : Oh, no. I heard quite enough to satisfy me. Besides, there's no doubt about his honesty. He's a fanatic, but he's perfectly sincere.

MR. P. : Eighteen days gone out of the twenty-one. Come, Jopp, what do you say now ?

JOPP : Miss Dethic is a marvel.

MR. P. : You candidly confess yourself beaten ?

JOPP : I candidly confess, Prall, I don't know how it's done.

[DETHIC *strolls on to terrace with cigar. Listening, leans against wall.*

MR. P. : Oh, come, come, Jopp ; you don't suspect any trickery ?

JOPP : My dear Prall, I've lived sixty years in this world. I have never met with a single instance of cheating or deception or fraud of any description. I am told such things are occasionally practised on this planet, though happily not in this degree of longitude. Still, I do occasionally meet with—

MR. P. : With what ?

JOPP : With things that puzzle me. However, no amount of evidence that my eyes or ears can bring shall ever shake my theory that human nature is absolutely above suspicion.

MR. P. : Now, Jopp, I consider that very unhandsome. You find yourself beaten, and you hint at treachery. [DETHIC *is listening on terrace.*

SOPHIE : We are not beaten yet, Mr. Prall. There are three days more, and we intend from to-morrow to watch Miss Dethic more closely.

DETHIC (*to himself*) : Oh, you beauty. (MRS. PRALL *enters at conservatory.*) You may make what rules you like, Miss Jopp. My dear child will prove herself triumphant, as she has done hitherto. Has she not, Mrs. Prall ?

MRS. P. : She has, indeed. I'm quite sure there is no deception.

[*Exit* DETHIC *through archway.*

Enter LADY EVE *and* LORD A. *on terrace.*

LADY E. : What are you talking about ? Miss Dethic ? I'm sure she has this strange power, whatever it is. Since she has been in the house I've felt so much better.

LORD A. (*to* JOPP) : You hear that ?

LADY E. : Isn't she coming to say good-night to me ?

SOPHIE : I'll bring her to you. [*Goes up the keep steps and opens door.*

MRS. P. (*aside to* JUXON) : I wish, Juxon, you wouldn't be so friendly with that girl. She seems to me a highly unsuitable companion for a young man.

JUXON : We will not discuss that question just now, my dear mother.

SOPHIE (*at top of steps, calls*) : Miss Dethic ! (VASHTI *appears from tower door.*) Lady Eve wants to say good-night to you.

[VASHTI *runs down steps with bravado and assumed cheerfulness to* LADY EVE. *They go down stage together.*

JOPP (*to himself, watching her*) : Very well put on, young lady ; very well put on.

[SOPHIE *has come down steps.* JUXON *joins her at back. They cross together and exeunt along terrace.*

LORD A. : How are you this evening, Miss Dethic ?

VASHTI : Quite well, Lord Asgarby—wonderfully well. (*With assumed gaiety.*) We'll take a run in the garden—shall we, Lady Eve ?

LADY E. (*excitedly*) : Yes : let's race to the lodge gates. Professor Jopp, Miss Dethic will win the day.

JOPP : Apparently.

LADY E. : You see strength does come to those to whom she wills it.

JOPP : Yes, I see.

LADY E. : You are quite convinced ?

JOPP : Quite.

LADY E. : Then there is no necessity for her to fast any longer ?

JOPP : None whatever. I cordially recommend her to give up her dangerous experiment.

VASHTI : I shall not give up my experiment, dangerous or not. (*To* LADY E.) Come, it's stifling here. We'll race to the lodge—no, to the lake or anywhere.

LADY E. (*catching her excitement*) : Yes. Come along.

JOPP (*intercepts them as they are going*) : Stay, Miss Dethic. If you care for her health, persuade her not to stay up. Come, Lady Eve, it's nearly ten o'clock,

and whatever Miss Dethic's mysterious method is, it is far more likely to act if you keep early hours. Come, say good-night.

LADY E. : No. (*Turns away petulantly.*) I don't want to go to bed. I never really feel alive till after dinner. Miss Dethic—(VASHTI *goes to her*)—I want to stay near you. Come ! The moonlight's lovely. Our race !

[JOPP *again intercepts them.*

JOPP : The night air by the lake is dangerous, Miss Dethic. Persuade her to go to bed.

VASHTI (*after a pause ; to* LADY EVE) : Professor Jopp is right. Say good-night to us.

[PRALL *rises, and exit with* MRS. P.

LADY E. (*pointing*) : Oh, very well. (*Kisses her. To* LORD A.) Good-night.

LORD A. : Good-night, my dear.

MRS. P. : Good-night, Lady Eve. [*Exeunt* MR. *and* MRS. PRALL.

LORD A. (*kisses her very passionately*) : You'll soon be fast asleep.

LADY E. (*excitedly*) : No, I shan't. I never slept till three last night. And then I dreamed—I had the strangest dream about you. (*Runs to* VASHTI.) I must tell you. I dreamed we were drowning together. Professor Jopp, have you ever been nearly drowned ? It's enchanting ! At first we tried to swim, and it was hard work to keep up ; and the waves dashed over us, and took away our breath ; and then I caught you in my arms, and I said, " Don't let us try to keep alive any more. Let's sink, and see what it is like." And I felt so strong. I dragged you under the water ; it was delightful ! Down—down—down—I felt like a mermaid dragging you down to my home ; and we kept on sinking, and the deeper we got the clearer and sweeter the water was ; it was full of lovely gold and silver fish, and they swam round us ; and we went through gardens of waving purple seaweed, and all the little bubbles in the water turned into diamonds and hung round our necks, and dragged us deeper still, and we kept on falling for hours ; and at last you wanted to leave me, but I clung to you and pulled you down, and said, " How can you want to go back to that hateful world ? Come down and drown with me, drown—drown—drown ! " And you said, " Let me go—I want to get back to life. There is some one who loves me up there." And I said, " There are two who love you down here—Death and I. Stay with us and die. You don't know how sweet it is." But you kissed me and said good-bye ; and I tried to keep you, but you faded out of my arms ; and when I tried to hold you, there was no one there, and I cried out, " Stay with me—stay with me ! " And then I woke, and I was crying, and it was just daylight ! You won't leave me !

[*Throwing her arms round* VASHTI, *desperately weeping, her head on* VASHTI's *knee.*

VASHTI : Do not fear. If I cannot bring you back to life with me, I will stay and drown with you.

Re-enter MR. *and* MRS. PRALL.

LADY E. (*kisses her passionately : throws her arms around* VASHTI's *neck*) : I don't want to go away from you.

JOPP (*has been listening and showing impatience and anxiety at* LADY EVE's *excitement*) : Come, Lady Eve, this excitement will never do. Come, come. Bed, bed, bed ! Say good-night.

LADY E. : Good-night, Professor Jopp.

[*Shakes his hand, then crosses to conservatory steps.*

JOPP : And no dreams to-night.

LADY E. (*on conservatory steps*) : Yes, I shall dream of you.

JOPP : You won't drown me ?

LADY E. : No, I'll fly away with you to the stars.

[*Kisses her hand to* VASHTI, *and exit through conservatory.*

Re-enter DETHIC *at archway.*

JOPP (*aside sternly to* VASHTI) : If you wish to keep her alive, don't let her excite herself as she has done to-night. You understand ?

VASHTI (*pause*) : I understand.

[*Exit* JOPP *along terrace.* VASHTI *goes up to terrace.*

MR. P. (*cordially*) : She's wonderfully improved, Asgarby.

DETHIC : I told Lord Asgarby how it would be. I hope, my lord, you are satisfied.

LORD A. : She certainly seems better.

ROPER *enters through conservatory*

ROPER : Mr. Prall's carriage.

Re-enter SOPHIE *and* JUXON.

MR. P. : Good-night, Asgarby. We'll come over again on Monday. Good-night, Miss Dethic. [*Shakes hands and crosses to conservatory.*

MRS. P. (*shakes hands with* LORD A. *To* VASHTI) : Good-night, dear. (*Kisses* VASHTI. *Then crosses to conservatory.*) Are you ready, Juxon ?

JUXON (*lighting cigarette*) : I would prefer to walk. Our drive home from the Selwyns' the other night was far from pleasant to *me*.

MR. P. : You would insist on arguing all the way.

JUXON : My dear father, when you advance such extraordinary opinions, how can I refrain from endeavouring to put you right ? Ah, when shall I reconcile myself to the inevitable folly of the vast majority of my fellow-creatures ?

MR. P. : Sooner than the majority of your fellow-creatures will reconcile themselves to your wisdom.

MRS. P. : Then you'll walk home, Juxon ?

JUXON : If you don't mind. I'm really afraid of being drawn into some discussion with you or my father, and really I am not equal to the exertion to-night —I'm not, indeed !

MR. P. : Very well, my boy, we will spare you our company.

[MR. *and* MRS. PRALL *and* LORD A. *exit through conservatory.*

DETHIC (*creeping up to* VASHTI) : Look out for me as soon as the house is asleep. (SOPHIE *turns sharply, nearly catching him.*) A lovely moon ! [*Exit along terrace.*

SOPHIE (*to* JUXON) : Don't go away—come back here in an hour.

JUXON : Why ?

SOPHIE : Mr. Dethic is going to run the blockade to-night. (JOPP *and* LORD A. *re-enter in conservatory.*) We'll watch him. Hush !

JUXON (*to* LORD A.) : Good-night, Lord Asgarby. Good-night, Jopp. My poor father seems quite happy in displaying his folly and ignorance. Did you ever witness such a lamentable exhibition ? Tchk ! Tchk !

[*Exit through conservatory.*

LORD A. (*to* JOPP) : You heard what Eve said—she's really better !

[*Very anxiously.*

JOPP : A little, perhaps. But you must keep her from these fits of excitement. They'll do no end of mischief.

LORD A. : Good-night, Miss Dethic. You're sure your own health is not suffering ? [*Shakes hands with her.*

VASHTI : Quite sure, my lord. Good-night.

[*Exit* LORD A. *by terrace, after shaking hands with* SOPHIE.

SOPHIE : Shall I see you safely housed for the night, Miss Dethic ?

VASHTI : I am ready.

SOPHIE : Come, then. [*Goes up steps and into tower.*

VASHTI : Good-night, Professor Jopp.

JOPP : Good-night.

VASHTI (*triumphantly*) : You see I shall count Lady Eve amongst those whom I have cured.

JOPP : You mean those who have cured themselves.

VASHTI : Cured themselves ?

JOPP : If you don't know the secret of this mysterious power of yours, I'll explain it to you. These good folks whom you cure are all suffering from different kinds of nervous diseases, where only volition is required to make them better. Their faith in you gives the necessary shock to their volition, and brings its powers into exercise. But in all cases of organic disease I assure you you are as helpless as—as any regular practitioner ; and that's saying a good deal.

VASHTI : But there is no proof that I have not cured them.

JOPP : Certainly there is no proof. And that is why I think you are behaving very foolishly.

VASHTI : What do you mean ?

JOPP : If your patients insist on getting well, neither I nor any one else can possibly prove you have not cured them. But—I can and will prove that you can't live without eating.

VASHTI (*goes up a few steps ; staggers. He comes to her assistance. She repulses him ; stands panting*) : You'll prove that ? Very well. Prove it—if you can.

JOPP : You are foolish. Think again. Trust me. You shall find me one of the best friends you ever had.

VASHTI : What do you mean ?

JOPP : You've set yourself a task beyond your strength. Give it up.

VASHTI : Ah ! You find I've beaten you, and now you want me to give you the victory.

JOPP (*quietly, earnestly, rather tenderly*) : I want no victory, Miss Dethic. Come, let's both give up. What do you say ?

VASHTI (*pause*) : No.

JOPP (*shrugs his shoulders ; changes his tone*) : So be it. Only take care, because—

VASHTI : Because ?

JOPP : The Home Secretary hasn't let my spiritualist friend out of jail yet.

VASHTI (*terribly frightened, but trying to hide it with a pretended smile. Frightened, hoarse, whisper*) : Would you send me to jail ?

JOPP : I should be sorry : but you're trifling with the truth ; you're playing upon sacred feelings ; and I warn you I shall be merciless to you.

[VASHTI *shows great fright. Staggers on steps.* SOPHIE *holds the door open for her.*

SOPHIE : You're ill, Miss Dethic. Shall I stay with you ? [*Offers to support her.*

VASHTI : Thank you. I'm quite well. Good-night.

[*Goes into keep.* SOPHIE *locks the door after her.*

JOPP (*as* SOPHIE *comes down-stairs*) : That's a damned silly girl, but she's got pluck.

SOPHIE : There's a relief expedition intended to-night.

JOPP : She's locked in. No one can get to her.

SOPHIE : No, but still I think we'd better watch the father.

Enter ROPER *by terrace, carrying lantern.*

ROPER : Can I lock up, sir ?

JOPP : Yes ; we're just going off to bed. Roper, could you leave the conservatory unlocked for to-night ?

ROPER : Certainly, sir. I can lock the drawing-room door, so that there's no fear of anybody getting into the house.

JOPP : Thank you, Roper. Good-night.

ROPER : Good-night, sir. Young lady in the keep room going on quite comfortable, I hope?

JOPP : Quite, Roper ; so she says. Good-night.

ROPER : Good-night, sir.

[*Exeunt* JOPP *and* SOPHIE *along terrace.* ROPER *turns out lamp in conservatory ; exit ; shuts door, and is heard to turn key in lock.*

Front of stage dark. Moonlight on terrace, and part of stage. After a long pause JUDAH *is seen climbing over parapet. Comes to the front of the keep.*

JUDAH (*looking towards her window*) : I cannot leave you. You draw me to you, loadstar of purity and goodness. Oh, there is something more than mortal in your beauty ! And I dared to speak of love to you, of earthly love !—I, who am not worthy to breathe the same air, or touch your garment with my lips. Forgive me ! Let me but walk where you feet have trodden, speak sometimes with you, look upon your heavenly beauty, see you do your gracious acts of mercy and kindness, and it shall be enough for me. (*Standing on top of steps, looking up at the house.*) The house is quiet ; all the lights are out ; they are asleep. (*Turns again towards keep.*) Are you asleep, too, worn out with fasting and watching ? Giving up your life that others may live ? Oh, let me be your sentinel, your watch-dog, and keep guard that no evil thing comes near you. Nay, no evil thing could come near you. Keep her ! Give her strength to defeat her enemies, and show Thy power to them that deny Thee !

[*Going into warder's niche, is hidden.*

Pause. DETHIC *enters at terrace, looking cautiously round.*

DETHIC : That confounded moon ! What the plague does it want to shine to-night for ?—as if it couldn't blaze away some other night ! Thank goodness, everybody sleeps on the other side of the house. They're all safely in bed by this time. What's this ? The conservatory door open ? There's some one in there. (*Striking match and searching conservatory.*) No. It's been left open by accident. If I'd known that, I might have got out this way. I must risk it and give her the key. (*Goes up the steps ;* JUDAH *is in the shade of the keep watching him.* DETHIC *pulls out a key, opens door very quietly, looking up at the house to see whether he is watched all the while. Opens door.*) Vashti ! Vashti !

[*Taking food out of his pocket.*

VASHTI (*in doorway*) : Have you brought it ?

DETHIC : Yes, my darling. Here, here. Come down to the conservatory. I mustn't leave the house again. (*Giving her food,* VASHTI *eats ravenously.*) I've got plenty of food for you, but I had to drop out of the first-floor window, so I was obliged to leave it in my room.

VASHTI : Go and fetch it. I must have it. I'm starving.

DETHIC (*brings her down steps*) : My darling, that Miss Jopp is on the lookout. I mustn't be seen again. Here, take this key. You see, I got it copied. Tozer did it. I stole it from Miss Jopp. She never missed it, and I put it back in her pocket without her even knowing it. They've forgotten to lock up the conservatory. You come in there and wait. You know that door that leads into the drawing-room. I'll bring it to you there.

VASHTI : But the door is locked and bolted.

DETHIC : The key's left in it on the other side. I took stock of that. You wait down there, and I'll give it to you in ten minutes from now.

VASHTI : Bring it me, bring it me ! Quick ! I don't want to be found down here.

DETHIC : All right, my love. Wait there in the conservatory. I won't keep you long.

VASHTI : Make haste ! (DETHIC *goes off at terrace.* VASHTI *watches* DETHIC *going off.* JUDAH *rises in the warder's seat and comes down steps. She hears his footsteps, turns round, and sees him on steps.*) You ! (*Deadly quiet whisper.*) You heard ?

JUDAH (*very calm*) : Every word.

VASHTI : You know what I am.

JUDAH (*still very calm*) : Don't I tell you I heard all ?

VASHTI (*pause*) : What do you think of me ? (*He does not reply. In more agitated tone.*) What do you think of me ? (*Still no reply. Again, more excited.*) Tell me : I must know. What do you think of me ?

JUDAH : I cannot think. Good is evil, day is night. Are you angel or devil—or both? What are you? The brightest saint of all hell, the blackest fiend of all heaven ? What are you ? Oh, I know ! And I'd have died rather than know !

VASHTI : Don't speak like that. I told you I was not a saint, but only a woman—a vain, foolish, ambitious girl ; but not—not willingly wicked, only weak. Oh ! (*Imploringly.*) Don't think badly of me. I can't bear it, I can't bear it.
[*Kneels and clings to him.*

JUDAH (*pushing her away*) : You'd cast your snares round me again. You would make me believe in you now—now—after what I have heard. And—God forgive me—if I listen to you I shall be ready to sell my eternal peace, my very soul, at your bidding. Let me go, woman—let me go !
[*Throwing her from him,* VASHTI, *on her knees, clings to him, holds him.*

VASHTI (*very imploringly*) : No, no ; hear me first—you must hear me—you shall hear me, and then kill me if you like—for I cannot live if you hate me ! Hear me—oh ! it is the very last thing I shall ever beg of you.

JUDAH (*tears himself away from her*) : Woman ! I know you.

VASHTI : No—you do not know me ; and you will not hear me. (*Bursts into tears. He is going, but is stopped by her appealing attitude. Kneeling.*) You don't know what my childhood and girlhood were like—how often we were pressed for money. Sometimes we had scarcely bread enough to eat. We went to Spain. I found I was able to cure many of the foolish country people if they only believed in me, and my father persuaded me if I could only show them that I could live without food it would be a sign of my possessing supernatural power. I began, and it was as he said. I found everybody believed in me. When I had once begun, I was obliged to go on. We came back to England and then I met you ; and at first I was pleased to see what power I had over you. But when I saw that you believed in me and loved me, I gradually felt how wicked I'd been. I tried again and again to give it up ; I tried to tell you. I wanted you to know the truth about me, and yet I couldn't bear you to think that I was not worthy of your love. You know it now. Oh ! tell me you forgive me. (*Seizing his hand. Imploringly.*) Oh, say you forgive me.
[*Very emphatic.*

JUDAH (*has regained calmness*) : I forgive you. Let me go.
[*Going up stage, she retains his hand.*

VASHTI : Good-bye. [*She takes his hand to her lips, and kisses it.*

JUDAH (*fired with her kiss*) : What have you done ? (*Looks at her in the moonlight.*) Oh, you are more beautiful than ever to-night. (*Looking at her passionately.*) This is all a dream. I blot the past hour from my memory. You're mad to say that you could cheat and deceive. I will not believe you. (*Takes both her hands in his.*) You are very truth. How dare you slander yourself ?

VASHTI : Ah ! No ! (*Drawing away from him ; withdraws her hand.*) Know me for what I am—a cheat, an impostor, a liar.

JUDAH : Hush ! hush ! You shall not say so.

VASHTI : Oh ! why should you deceive yourself? You know the truth of me at last, and I am glad—yes, I am glad. Think what I am—vain, weak, false !

JUDAH : Why, yes, perhaps you are, and therefore so much nearer me. (*Raises her and clasps her in his arms.*) I thought you out of my reach, up there amongst the stars ; and you're of this earth, like myself, a woman made for me ! Ah, yes ! I'm glad you are what you are, for I can make you mine now.

VASHTI (*breaking away from him*) : No no, for your own sake you must give me up ; have no more to do with me. Disown me ; forget me !

JUDAH : Forget you !

VASHTI : You must. For your own sake—for the sake of your future. Forget me ! It is the best for both ; but—you won't betray me ?

JUDAH : Betray you ? I love you. (*Embracing her.*) Oh, don't you see you are nearer to me for this night ; we are bound to each other. I love you ! I love you ! My wife !

VASHTI (*recoiling from him, recovers herself with immense effort. Speaks calmly*) : I cannot be your wife—I'm not worthy of you.

JUDAH : You do not love me ?

VASHTI : I cannot be your wife. I won't drag you down to me. (*Noise of footsteps heard outside on terrace.*) Ah, hush. Who's that ?

[JUDAH *is about to send her up steps, but realising they will be seen, draws her back into the conservatory. They hide behind palms.* SOPHIE *and* JOPP *come along terrace, listening at back.*

SOPHIE : I certainly heard voices.

JOPP : I thought so. [*Crosses to archway ; looks off.*

SOPHIE : Everything is quiet. Let's wait here. It's the best place to watch the keep.

JOPP (*sits*) : Deuce take the girl ! (*Yawns.*) To think I should be fool enough to let her rob me of my beauty-sleep to prove to the British public that she's a swindler.

SOPHIE : There will be some satisfaction in thoroughly exposing her, and seeing her safely locked up.

JOPP : It's the British public that ought to be locked up till it learns wisdom.

SOPHIE : It would be locked up for ever, then.

JOPP : I dare say. Still I must own that in the great epic war between rogues and fools, all my sympathies go with the rogues.

SOPHIE : So do mine ; but that's no reason why we should not hang both rogues and fools.

JOPP : Oh, I mean to punish my lady. She should have accepted my terms an hour ago ; now it's too late.

[*A noise of very gently withdrawing locks and bolts is heard at the drawing-room door.*

SOPHIE (*rises, seizes* JOPP'S *hand ;* JOPP *rises to meet her*) : Hush ! What did I tell you ? Some one is at the drawing-room door.

JOPP : Mr. Dethic. We'll let him get well at his work before we disturb him. The archway—quick !

[SOPHIE *goes off at archway.* JOPP *follows, and closes door after them.* DETHIC *cautiously opens door in conservatory and is coming on.*

JUDAH (*in conservatory, in a whisper*). Keep back ! If you are seen, you'll ruin her. (*Hurries* DETHIC *off. To* VASHTI.) Quick, up the steps ! Lock yourself in.

[VASHTI *takes the key that* DETHIC *has given her out of her pocket, rushes up steps with it, goes in, closes keep door after her, locks herself in.* JUDAH *goes up the steps ; takes his place in the warder's niche and is hidden.*

JOPP *and* SOPHIE *re-enter from archway door on terrace and come out.*

JOPP : He's gone up !

SOPHIE : Yes, I heard his steps.
JOPP : Give me the key. You go along the terrace and give the alarm. (*Exit* SOPHIE *along the terrace*). He has another key, then.
[JOPP *goes up steps ; opens keep door. Fire-bell is heard to ring violently. General alarm of the house.* LORD A. *enters along terrace. Comes to foot of steps.* SOPHIE *re-enters from terrace after the ringing of the fire-bell is done.*
LORD A. : What is it, Jopp ?
JOPP (*at top of steps*) : Mr. Dethic is now in the keep, taking food to his daughter.

Re-enter SOPHIE *with* LADY EVE, *followed by* ROPER *with lantern, and several* SERVANTS.

LORD A. : Where is the key ?
JOPP : I have it. (*Opens the keep door and calls.*) Mr. Dethic, Mr. Dethic !
VASHTI (*comes to door*) : What is the matter ?
LORD A. : Your father is in there—ask him to come out.
VASHTI : My father is not here.
JOPP : You are alone ?
VASHTI : I am alone. Search the place if you please.
[JOPP *goes in.* JUDAH *comes down from the warder's seat on to the terrace.* VASHTI *follows him.*
LORD A. : Mr. Llewellyn ! What are you doing here ?
JUDAH : I've watched her every night of Miss Dethic's stay.
LORD A. : You've watched here ? How long have you been here to-night ?
JUDAH : Ever since the house went to rest. [*Comes down steps.*
LORD A. : You have brought Miss Dethic food ?
JUDAH : No. [JOPP *returns from keep-room crestfallen.*
JOPP : I'm mistaken ; I own it. But I heard voices, I'm sure. Who was it ? Who was speaking here a few moments ago ? Mr. Llewellyn ! (*Challenges* JUDAH.) You know something of this, sir.
JUDAH : I know nothing. (*Pause.* JOPP *looks at him severely.*) Don't you believe me ?
JOPP (*looking at him*) : I don't know. Give me your oath—you have not brought Miss Dethic any food. [VASHTI *looks* at JUDAH.
JUDAH : My oath—I have not brought Miss Dethic any food.
JOPP : Your oath—you have not seen her take any. [VASHTI *looks at him.*
JUDAH (*after a pause*) : My oath—I have not seen her take any.
[VASHTI *shows relief.*
JOPP : Your oath—she has not been outside that door, to your knowledge.
[*Longer pause.*
JUDAH : My oath—she has not been outside that door to my knowledge.
JOPP (*looks at him*) : Enough ! I take your word. I was mistaken.

CURTAIN.

A year passes between Acts II and III.

ACT III

SCENE—*Same as in Act I.*

Discover LADY EVE *seated in armchair, and* LORD ASGARBY *standing by* LADY EVE.

LADY EVE : Then everything's settled.
LORD A. : Everything. Granger brings the deed to-day, and Mr. Llewellyn and Papworthy are to meet me and read it over.

LADY E. : And on the foundation-stone it is to be carved that the building is in memory of my getting well again.

LORD A. : Yes.

LADY E. : And nothing is to be said about Vashti having cured me ?

LORD A. : No, my dear ; it is better to leave such questions alone.

LADY E. (*pettishly*) : But it is she who has cured me. If she had not come to Asgarby when she did, the wind would have blown me away before this.

LORD A. : Eve, my darling, don't speak like this !

LADY E. : Why not ? Leaves must fall, even rose-leaves ; and then they mustn't litter the garden—they must be swept away to make room for the live flowers.

[*Goes to window and exit.*

LORD A. : She's better ; she's stronger than she has ever been. What does it matter what the cause is ? [LADY EVE *comes swiftly in again.*

LADY E. : Here's that dreadful Mr. Dethic. He's always hinting to me about money. I'm sure Vashti won't like him to live with her and Mr. Llewellyn. Can't you pension him to live away from them ?

LORD A. : Yes, dear, if you wish it.

DETHIC *enters at window, rather better dressed, affable, familiar, jaunty.*

DETHIC : Ha ! Do you know, my lord, the more I see of this noble historical pile, the more I'm intoxicated with it !

LORD A. (*coolly*) : Indeed, Mr. Dethic.

DETHIC : Language entirely fails to convey the depth of my attachment to this venerable place and its venerable owner.

LORD A. : We will spare you the expression of your feelings, Mr. Dethic. Lady Eve and I have been speaking of your daughter's approaching marriage to Mr. Llewellyn. (DETHIC *shows great interest.*) You will not, I suppose, live with them ?

DETHIC : Well, my lord, nothing has been mentioned about my future, but I see no reason why I should not be perfectly happy and comfortable with my dear children.

LORD A. : That arrangement will suit them ?

DETHIC : I should say so. I always make myself agreeable in all circles of society, and if nobody expresses a violent dislike to my company, I take it for granted I'm welcome, and—if I may use a playful term—chum on !

LORD A. : Miss Dethic refuses to accept my offer of a provision for herself.

DETHIC : It's ungrateful of her. I've argued it with her scores of times. I know your lordship will never suspect us of mercenary motives ; but still, if any trifling way of showing your gratitude should suggest itself—

VASHTI *enters.* LADY EVE *joins her.* VASHTI *kisses her.*

(DETHIC *seeing* VASHTI *drops his voice*) : I think, my lord, I could better express my paternal care for Vashti's future if we were out of her hearing.

LORD A. : Doubtless. Come this way, Mr. Dethic. I have a proposal to make to you on the subject.

DETHIC (*very gratefully*) : Thank you, my lord, thank you.

[LORD A. *and* DETHIC *exeunt.* VASHTI *seats herself.* LADY EVE *kneels by her side.*

LADY E. : You grow sadder and sadder the nearer you get to your wedding-day. How is it ?

VASHTI : No, no !

LADY E. : Yes, you do. You love Mr. Llewellyn ?

VASHTI : Love him !

LADY E. : And he loves you. I wish I had a lover. Oh, if somebody would but once—only once look at me as Mr. Llewellyn looks at you !

VASHTI (*radiant*) : He does love me !

LADY E. : Yes, but he has changed.

VASHTI (*alarmed*) : Changed ! No, no ! He cannot change.

LADY E. : Yes, he doesn't love you now as he did a year ago.

VASHTI : Oh, don't say that ! don't say that ! What do you mean ?

LADY E. : He used to look at you as if he wanted to worship you ; now he looks at you as if he wanted to protect you.

VASHTI (*reassured—a great sigh of relief ; in a low, pleased voice*) : I want him to protect me.

Enter JUDAH *at window, very pale, thinner, older.*

JUDAH : Lord Asgarby told me I should find you here.

[LADY EVE *runs to him, takes his hand, looks at him critically for a few seconds.*

LADY E. : You too ! (*Looks from one to the other.*) What makes you both so sad ? My father has promised me everything I asked him for you. It is to be the most magnificent building in Beachampton, and it is to be endowed while you are its minister, so that you will be perfectly happy, both of you, for all your lives.

JUDAH : I have done nothing to deserve this, Lady Eve. I cannot take it.

LORD A. *enters at window.*

LADY E. : Yes. you must ! Mr. Llewellyn says he will not take your gift. Tell him he must.

LORD A. : Indeed you must, Mr. Llewellyn. I promised if my child's life were spared that whatever Miss Dethic should ask, I would give her.

JUDAH : But it is too much ; besides, I have done nothing.

LORD A. : You are doing immense good ; your example is even better than your words. (JUDAH *winces.*) We need such men as you—truthful, upright, honest, open as the day. I do not ask what your creed is : your actions are enough for me— [JUDAH *shows compunction.*

LORD A. (*going up to* LADY EVE) : What are you doing, Eve ?

LADY EVE (*blowing away the thistledown*) : Seeing how long I shall live.

LORD A. : How can you tell ?

LADY E. : Don't you see ? I have blown six times, and all the seeds have flown from the stalk. I shall live just six years longer.

LORD A. (*clasping her very tenderly*) : Eve !

[*Exeunt* LORD A. *and* LADY EVE by window. JUDAH *and* VASHTI *watch them off, then instinctively go to each other.*

VASHTI : You are ill ? [*Takes his hands.*

JUDAH : It is nothing. You ?

VASHTI : I'm well enough ; but you—you are working too hard. Every one says you must break down. (*Pause. Frightened whisper.*) What ailed you yesterday morning ?

JUDAH : In the service ?

VASHTI : Yes.

JUDAH : Nothing. Why ? I spoke as usual, did I not ?

VASHTI : Yes ; but much more powerfully. This last year—ever since—(*pause*)—ever since that dreadful night here, your tongue seems to be on fire ; you speak as you never spoke before.

JUDAH : Do I ? I ought to be able to proclaim the truth, for I know what lying is.

VASHTI : Hush, hush ! don't speak like that ! Tell me—what was it yesterday morning ?

JUDAH : You noticed, then ?

VASHTI : Only that you were much disturbed, and once I thought you would have broken down. What was it ?

JUDAH : The same as it has been all the year ; only it was worse than ever yesterday. Every sentence I spoke I heard shouted in my ear, " Lies, lies ; come down, liar ! Come down ! Lies ! Lies ! Lies ! " It spoke so plainly I thought all the congregation must have heard it ; and afterwards, as I poured out the wine, it laughed in the cup and said, " Go on, go on ! Poison them, poison them with your lies ! Poison them ! "

VASHTI (*clinging to him—in a frightened whisper*) : Hush ! hush ! You mustn't speak like this. Indeed there was nothing.

JUDAH : I know there was nothing, but I heard it. I've heard it all night long. It's been with me on my walk here this morning—on the other side of the hedge as I came along. It kept mocking at me ! Hark ! It's here now. In this room. Don't you hear it ?

VASHTI : No ; there is not a sound.

JUDAH : Yes. Hark ; there ! Listen ! You hear what it says. Liar ! Hypocrite ! Liar ! Hypocrite. Liar ! Hypocrite !

[*Stretches out his hands in mute appeal ; then falls on settee, shivering with horror.*

VASHTI (*goes to him*) : Oh, my dear one, my best loved ! Indeed, indeed, all is still as the grave !

JUDAH : If it were so ! If I could stop my ears forever ! Silence ! Silence ! Eternal silence ! (*Pause.*) We'll leave this place !

VASHTI : Yes, yes ; where shall we go ?

JUDAH : Anywhere ! anywhere ! I can't stay here ! Why can't they give up building this church for me ?

VASHTI : Lady Eve has set her heart upon it. The architect and the lawyer and everybody are coming this afternoon. It is to be the most beautiful building in the city.

JUDAH : It won't stand. If they lay the foundations as deep as the roots of the hills, and build the walls twenty feet thick, it can't stand. It's built on lies.

VASHTI : Oh, don't speak like this ! You tear my heart to pieces.

[*Bursts into tears.*

JUDAH (*very tenderly takes her to him*) : Forgive me, dear ! You, too, look weary. I ought not to have told you.

VASHTI : Yes, yes, let me share all your griefs, all your burdens, as you have shared mine. Oh ! I can't bear to think what I have done. If I should be discovered ! if I should bring disgrace upon you now !

JUDAH : Very well, let it be so ; I can bear it.

VASHTI : No ! No ! Every one believes in you, and I am so proud of you ; I couldn't bear to have your name dragged in the mire with mine. Give me up even now, send me away from you ; let me go.

JUDAH : Not for every blessing in this world will I part from you ! (*Takes her in his arms.*) Heap them all up—fame, riches, health, peace of mind, length of days, honour, friendship, every joy of body, mind, and soul that the heart of man can desire—put them in one scale and your love in the other. I will not have them—I don't want them. I want your love—I will not barter you away for all the world contains. [*Clasping her very tenderly.*

VASHTI : Oh ! but think what I am.

JUDAH : You are yourself ! You are myself ! Whatever you are I will make myself that I may be like you. I will deserve you, be sure ! I will be your mate. If you are evil, I will be evil too, so that at the last I may taste every drop of suffering that you taste, feel every pang, and keep your soul side by side with mine forever ! [*Pause.*

VASHTI : If you knew how I have tried to be good since I have known you! Every moment of my life I try to be just that woman you thought me before you knew me for what I am. I have repented—oh, most bitterly ! You too—you have repented ?

JUDAH : No, I cannot. The oath I took that night has burnt into me. Every fibre of me is a lie ! (VASHTI *tears herself away from him with a cry ; bursts into tears.* JUDAH *rises, goes to her.*) What is it ? What now ?

VASHTI : Oh, I have ruined you forever. You were the best, the most honourable man on earth. You were truth itself, and I have dragged you down to me. How can you love me ?

JUDAH (*very tenderly*) : How can I not love you ? (VASHTI *bursts into tears, turns and buries her head in his arms. He folds her most tenderly to him ; she is sobbing in his arms.*) Hush ! hush ! Hold fast to me ! We're shipwrecked together. If we find land, we'll find it together. If we perish, we'll perish together ! Either way you are mine ! There's nothing else much matters ! Don't blame yourself. All is as it should be. You're mine ; there's nothing I would change.

[*Kisses her.*

Enter JOPP, *shown in by* ROPER.

ROPER : I'll tell his lordship you're here, sir. [*Exit by window.*

[JUDAH *and* VASHTI *show surprise and some degree of alarm.*

JOPP : Good-morning, Mr. Llewellyn. (*He advances to* JUDAH, *holds out his hand ;* JUDAH *will not take it.*) No? I'm your friend. You don't believe me? (*Looking at* VASHTI.) I told Miss Dethic I was her friend once ; she wouldn't believe me ; and yet she'd have been wise to make me her friend.

VASHTI : Aren't you my friend now ?

JOPP (*looks at her ; then a direct—*) : No, I'm not.

VASHTI (*alarmed*) : Why have you come to Asgarby ?

JOPP : I always spend a few weeks with Lord Asgarby at this time of the year.

VASHTI : But you were not expected.

JOPP : No ; the fact is I have a little business with Lord Asgarby and—(*looking at* JUDAH)—and with Mr. Llewellyn too. May I be so ungallant as to ask you to leave us ?

JUDAH : You can speak to me before Miss Dethic. (*Takes her hand.*) I have no business with any one that she has not a right to hear.

JOPP : I must speak to you alone.

JUDAH : I will not hear. (*Turns away to window.*)

VASHTI (*intercepting* JUDAH) : Yes, yes ; please, please, hear what he has to say ; I'll go. (*Showing great alarm ; goes to window ; stops ; comes down to* JOPP *very anxiously.*) This business that has brought you to Asgarby so suddenly—is it about me ?

JOPP (*pause. Looks at her*) : Yes.

[VASHTI *makes a gesture of alarm ;* JUDAH *reassures her, and then goes with her to window. Exit* VASHTI. JUDAH *comes down to* JOPP.

JOPP (*holding out his hand*) : Come ; give me your hand. I tell you I'm your friend.

JUDAH (*will not take it*) : When I've heard what you have to say.

JOPP : Very well ; very well. You're going to marry that young lady ?

JUDAH : Next Thursday.

JOPP (*looks kindly at* JUDAH *again*) : When I was in practice, I had to cauterize a young labourer who had been bitten by a mad dog—a fine, sturdy young fellow with a very limited vocabulary. He swore at me fearfully at the time, but he thanked me afterwards.

JUDAH : Well ?

JOPP : I'm going to cauterize you.

JUDAH : Go on.

JOPP (*puts his hand affectionately on* JUDAH's *shoulder*) : My lad, I haven't seen you for a year. But I wouldn't say I'm not just a little fond of you. I know the value of such men as you. It is you man who believes in something, believes in himself, believes in his fellow men, in the woman he loves, in the faith his fathers have taught him—that's the man that's good for something in this world. (*Dryly.*) I don't believe in anything myself, so I'm good for nothing. (JUDAH *moves uneasily away from him.*) Don't move away from me. I'm determined to be your friend.

JUDAH : Say what you have to say.

JOPP : You believe in this Miss Dethic. I knew you were mistaken a year ago. I tried all I could to open your eyes then, but she was too many for us. I knew very well all the while she was deceiving Lord Asgarby, deceiving Lady Eve, deceiving you.

JUDAH : She was not deceiving me.

JOPP : My dear sir, you were blind—although you know, that night here, for a moment I was disposed to think that you might be aiding her in her lies.

JUDAH : You thought that ?

JOPP : Forgive me ; it was only for a moment. I don't mind telling you that, if she was foolish enough to play her tricks again, I would let you be her keeper, and I would believe your word as easily as I would disbelieve her oath.

JUDAH : Indeed ! Yet she is as truthful as I am.

JOPP : Tut, tut ! You've got a fine career before you ; I don't want to see you throw it away. This woman is an impostor. I can prove it ; all the country shall ring with it, and in a week to-day, if she is in England at all, she shall be in prison.

JUDAH : You'll prove her an impostor ? How ?

JOPP : There is but one key to those tower rooms.

JUDAH : Which was in your daughter's keeping.

JOPP : Mr. Dethic had another key made. I've got the locksmith who made it for him. He's waiting for me at the Asgarby Arms now. I have had detectives at work for months. I've fished out all the past history of these Dethics, and they can't escape me. As soon as I have seen Lord Asgarby, I bring my man up from the village and prove it.

JUDAH (*looks at* JOPP *for some seconds, then calmly*) : Bring him.

JOPP : You will marry Miss Dethic next Thursday ?

JUDAH : Yes.

JOPP : Are you mad ? Her character is lost ! The man who marries her will be utterly ruined for life.

JUDAH : I am that man ! Prove your worst against her. Write " Liar " on her forehead, make her name a byword all over England, hunt her to shame, to prison, to another country, I'm her partner ! I love her ! There's no locksmith living can put bars between her and me, and the sword was never forged that can divide us in twain. Do your worst ! To-morrow she shall be my wife. [*Exit after* VASHTI *by window.*

JOPP (*looking after him*) : That's a splendid—fool ! Well, never again while this this world wags will I permit myself the luxury of any interference with its love affairs.

JUXON *enters at window, followed by* SOPHIE.
SOPHIE *crosses behind and sits in armchair.*

JUXON : Good-morning, Jopp. How d'ye do ?
[*Holds out his hand very limply and feebly.*

JOPP (*shaking hands*) : Good-morning, Mr. Prall. How are you ?

JUXON : I regret I am in a very low condition of health.

JOPP : How's that ?

JUXON : I do not choose to expose the infirmity of those who by some curious stroke of irony stand to me in the relation of father and mother, but their fatuous imbecility—I can really call it by no other name—has at last assumed such colossal proportions, that companionship with them is impossible to me. I cannot remain any longer under the same roof with them. It is positively sapping my vitality.

JOPP : You don't say so ?

JUXON : I assure you, Jopp, the constant endeavour for the last six months to root out from my father's mind the pernicious doctrines of protection and reciprocity has been nothing less than martyrdom to me—martyrdom !

[*Wiping his forehead in an agony of recollection.*

JOPP (*good-humouredly*) : Give him up as a bad job.

JUXON : I really must. In fact, it is with that view that—(*glancing at* SOPHIE.)—I have approached Miss Jopp with overtures—(*glancing a little nervously at her.*) Have I not ?

SOPHIE (*looking straight at her father*) : Mr. Prall and I intend to marry shortly, father.

JOPP (*jumps up from his seat*) : What the dev—what ?

SOPHIE : My dear father, pray control yourself. There is surely no reason for any intemperance of speech or feeling ! Juxon and I have thoroughly made up our minds. (*Looking at him very firmly and straight, with great determination.*) You surely don't propose to offer any resistance.

JOPP (*looks at them both for a few moments ; sees she is determined*) : No. [*Sits down.*

SOPHIE (*sweetly*) : Thank you. Then we needn't remind you that we are considerably over twenty-one.

JOPP (*sitting serenely, drops into a good-humoured, indifferent, ironic tone*) : Been engaged long ?

SOPHIE : Nearly twelve months.

JOPP : Got anything to marry on ?

SOPHIE : Nothing definite, at present.

JOPP : How are you going to live ?

JUXON : I have various things in contemplation.

JOPP : What in particular ?

JUXON : When I was making arrangements for my cremation the other day, the post of curator to the new cremation museum was offered to me, with a free residence overlooking the present Necropolis. I need hardly say the cremation of—er—other people would be a superlatively congenial occupation to me.

JOPP : Then why didn't you take it ?

JUXON : The salary was so deplorably insufficient.

JOPP : Anything else in view ?

JUXON : My father is remarkably well off.

JOPP : Well, won't he do something for you ?

JUXON (*to* JOPP) : By another bitter stroke of irony, the entire result of my six months' incessant argument with him on the science of political economy has been the destruction of a will in which he left me half his property, which is now made over to institutions whose very existence I have again and again warned him are plague-spots on society.

JOPP (*begins very solemnly*) : Young man—(*stops.*) No ; why should I ? (*Turns to* SOPHIE.) Sophie, you've quite made up your mind to marry this gentleman ?

SOPHIE : My dear father, you cannot suppose that in a matter of such importance as marriage, I should have spoken before I *had* made up my mind, or that I should tolerate any interference from a third person.

JOPP (*shrugs his shoulders ; calmly accepts the situation*) : All right. (*To* JUXON, *very solemnly*). Young man, I cannot make the least provision for my daughter ; therefore will you do me a favour ?

JUXON : Certainly, if it doesn't involve any sacrifice of principle.

JOPP : Would you oblige me by immediately adopting your father's views on political economy ?

JUXON (*shakes his head obstinately*) : I really can't do that—I can't indeed ; but—

JOPP : But what ?

JUXON : But. (*Looking off.*) Here are my father and mother coming. Sophie has told me what you have discovered about this Miss Dethic and her father.

JOPP : Indeed ! Sophie has told you—

JUXON : Everything. If you would consent to let them leave Asgarby without any public exposure, I think I could so arrange matters with my father that he would make ample provision for my future.

JOPP : What do you mean ?

JUXON : Will you allow me a few minutes' conversation with my father ? I will make my proposals to him, and bring them to you and Miss Jopp afterwards. Will you permit me ?

JOPP : You will not commit me to any course of action ?

JUXON : Not in the least.

JOPP : Come along, Sophie. [*Exit at door.* SOPHIE *rises and follows him.*

As they go off, enter MR. *and* MRS. PRALL *by window.*

PRALL : There ! Those Jopps are here again !

MRS. P. : Yes, that was surely that dreadful young person.

[*Looking after* SOPHIE.

JUXON : My dear mother, will you oblige me by refraining from comments on Miss Jopp ?

MRS. P. : I never met with a more disagreeable girl in my life. I'm sure the hussy knows all sorts of horrid things that she shouldn't.

JUXON (*with his sickly smile of superiority*) : I have myself directed Miss Jopp's studies, and I believe I am acquainted with the nature and extent of her knowledge on all subjects.

MRS. P. : I am ashamed of you, Juxon, to encourage an unmarried woman in these dreadful investigations.

JUXON : She did not require an encouragement.

MRS. P. : I dare say not.

JUXON : So far as I can judge, the young women of the present day are lamentably ignorant ; they may be said to know next to nothing.

PRALL : Oh, don't they ? [*Looking at newspaper.*

JUXON (*continuing with his sickly smile*) : I have trained Miss Jopp with the view of making her a fit companion for life.

PRALL : Companion for life—for whom ?

JUXON : For me, or for some man of equal intellectual breadth and vigour.

PRALL : Oh ! and is it to be you or the other man ?

JUXON : It is to be distinctly me. We marry as soon as possible.

PRALL : And how do you mean to live ?

JUXON : My dear sir—(*approaching* PRALL)—seeing that you are responsible for bringing me into existence, I think I may very fitly address that question to you. How am I to live ? Of course—(*with a sickly smile of superiority*)—with such literary and scientific attainments as mine, we couldn't possibly starve.

PRALL : Oh, couldn't you ? You try ! [*Turns away and sits in armchair.*

JUXON : But with your large fortune it is incontestably your duty—I say it is your duty—to provide for me in a suitable manner.

PRALL : I have already disposed of my fortune between your brother Jim and charities.

JUXON : I beg you will reconsider the matter, sir ; as if I am thrown on my own resources I shall be compelled to act in a manner that would be extremely disagreeable to you.

PRALL : Oh, how, sir ?

JUXON : Jopp and I have discovered the whole history of these Dethics. The man was a professional conjurer—Professor Janus, the Wizard of the East. We have also discovered the locksmith who made the key of the tower rooms for Mr. Dethic ; we have, in fact, the most complete evidence of the whole imposture.

PRALL (*taken aback*) : Oh ! And what do you mean to do ?

JUXON : I shall firstly write a letter to the *Times*, explaining how your peculiarly illogical intellect rendered you an easy victim ; I shall then deal with the matter in the reviews and magazines ; and, finally, I shall begin my long-contemplated work, " The History of Dupes," in which I shall deal at length with you as the most notorious example of credulity known in this century. In the meantime Professor Jopp will have made a public exposure of the girl and her father.

PRALL (*completely overcome*) : Oh ! You are going to do this—when ?

JUXON : I shall write to the *Times* to-morrow, unless—

PRALL : Unless what ?

JUXON : Unless you relieve me of the necessity of providing for my future. In that case I should persuade Jopp to let them off, and I should refrain from writing my history of your delusions. Weigh the matter carefully and let me know. I wish to spare you. [*Goes up to table, takes hat and stick.*

PRALL : How much per annum would you take ?

JUXON : Sufficient to pursue my studies, and to provide me with a comfortable home at—at some distance from your residence. Understand me : if I persuade Jopp to allow this affair to blow over, I must not be held to condone the mistakes and misrepresentations in your book. Nor do I acquiesce in your monstrous theories of reciprocity and protection. Understand that clearly ! [*Exit.*

PRALL : I wish I had sent that boy to sea instead of his brother Jim.

MRS. P. : Jim was never intellectual.

PRALL : No, thank Heaven. What's to be done ? If there's a public exposure, what will become of my book ?

MRS. P. : You've said nothing in it that isn't true.

PRALL : No—at least, of course if Jopp has been inquiring, there's no telling what construction may be put upon my truths.

MRS. P. : Nobody shall ever make me believe the girl's an impostor. James, whatever you do, don't withdraw your book from circulation.

PRALL (*firmly*) : I won't. After all, the public is the best judge. They like it, and there's a new edition just coming out.

MRS. P. : I wouldn't alter a single line.

PRALL (*positively*) : I won't !

MRS. P. : Whatever you have once asserted, never retract it.

PRALL (*same tone*) : I won't.

MRS. P. : And if there are any truths that are at all doubtful, I should make them very emphatic.

PRALL : I will ! I will—only—(*uneasily*)—if Juxon writes to the *Times*, and Jopp proves the girl's an impostor, it may place my truths in a very awkward light.

MRS. PRALL : Never mind. Repeat them over and over again, and in the end some one will believe them.

PRALL (*anxiously*) : Yes ; but it's very extraordinary how many truths can be disproved, you know ; and if there's a great public scandal,—Caroline, for the sake of keeping my truths untampered with, I shall make Juxon that allowance. [*Exeunt by window.*

Enter LORD A. *and* JOPP.

LORD A. : My dear Jopp, this is a most welcome surprise. You're going to stay, of course ?

JOPP : No, I've come on business. You have still got those Dethics here ?

LORD A. : Yes. I've kept my promise to the girl. I'm building a new church for Mr. Llewellyn, and endowing it. The deeds are to be signed this morning.

JOPP : Then I've come just in time. You must go no further, Asgarby. I have the whole history of these people. I can prove the father an impostor his whole life through.

LORD A. : Of course he's an impostor ; but Eve loves the girl, and has made me promise to make her a settlement on her marriage, and—blame me if you like, Jopp—I know I'm being duped—I know I'm a coward, and a fool perhaps—but I can't deny Eve anything. When I think she is the last of us, and in a few years I may be left alone— [*Breaks down ; turns away ; hides his head.*

LADY EVE *runs on.*

LADY E. : Oh, here you are, Professor Jopp. Sophie told me you were come. You're just in time.

JOPP : What for, Lady Eve ?

LADY E. : To play the hypocrite for once, will you ?

JOPP : Certainly, if you will coach me.

LADY E. : Well, first of all you are to say that I am quite well and strong. What's the matter, father ?

LORD A. : Nothing, Eve, nothing !

LADY E. : Tears ! (*To* JOPP.) You've been telling him I shall die.

JOPP : No, Lady Eve.

LADY E. : Well, perhaps I shall ; but not yet, not while my dear Vashti is near me to keep me alive. (JOPP *smiles.*) You're not to smile, Professor Jopp. It's true ! Come, father ; they are all in the library, and the deeds are ready. Where shall we sign them ?

LORD A. : It doesn't matter ; anywhere.

LADY E. : Then let us sign them here—here where I first saw Vashti ; and—(*to* JOPP)—you shall be a witness, will you ? (*Coaxingly.*) Just to please me.

JOPP : To please you, Lady Eve, I'd witness anything.

LADY E. : I know you're laughing up your sleeve.

JOPP : No, no, Lady Eve.

LADY E. : Yes. You think it's all moonshine, don't you ?

JOPP : Certainly not.

LADY E. : Yes, you do. I've read your books. But what's the use ?

JOPP : The use of what ?

LADY E. : Of proving all the fairy tales are false ; it only makes the children unhappy.

JOPP (*taking her hands very tenderly*) : And the grown-up people too.

[*Exit* LADY EVE.

LORD A. (*goes up to him very anxiously*) : What do you think of her ?

JOPP : She's certainly better.

LORD A. : You own it. And she will get well ? There's a chance of her living to old age ? Tell me !

JOPP (*very quietly*) : My dear Asgarby, she may live some years, but she will not live to old age.

LORD A. : Till womanhood ?

JOPP : Over the threshold, perhaps.

LORD A. : And, knowing that she cannot live longer, you ask me to thwart her—to send this Miss Dethic away ? My dear Jopp, you say you have fresh evidence against these people—(*Action of remonstrance from* JOPP.) I don't want to hear it. They will not live at the castle after next week – (*Gesture of remonstrance from* JOPP.) Let me go on now. I can't help it, Jopp –I know it's only superstition ; I know there's no reason for it, but I feel that somehow Eve's life does depend on Miss Dethic (*Action of remonstrance from* JOPP.) At any rate, you can see that it would be dangerous to Eve to part them.

JOPP : Yes, there would be a danger to Eve.

LORD A. : Then for her sake you will spare them, and say nothing of what you know ?

JOPP (*after a pause*) : Yes, Asgarby, I'll spare them. [*Offers hand.*

LORD A. (*shakes his hand heartily*) : Thank you, Jopp, thank you. I'll just go and see where these people are, and we will get the deeds signed as soon as possible. [*Exit.*

JOPP (*alone*) : After all, why not believe the fairy tales ? Why not pretend there is a dryad in every tree, and a nymph in every brook ? Nymphs and dryads may be as good names for the great secret as any other. Perhaps there is no great secret after all. (*Looking off.*) Here comes that infernal scoundrel ! So I shall be obliged to let you and your precious daughter off after all, shall I ?

Enter DETHIC *at window, affable, serene, cheerful as usual.*

DETHIC (*holding out his hand*) : Ah, how do you do, my dear professor ?

JOPP : How do *you* do, my dear *professor* ?

DETHIC (*slightly alarmed*) : Professor ?

JOPP : A title I share with you. I am professor of biology ; you are professor of the art of making plum-puddings in other people's hats, and conveying other people's watches and coins from their pockets into yours. (DETHIC *looks ghastly.* JOPP *glances at his own watch-chain ; handles it.*) Don't be alarmed ! I'm sure you wouldn't practise on a brother professor.

DETHIC (*frightened, but screwing up his courage as far as possible*) : I think you are mistaking me for—

JOPP : Some other *professor* ? No, professor, I'm not. Come, own up, Professor *Janus.* (*Winks at him good-humouredly.*) What made you give up the conjuring business, eh ?

DETHIC (*pause*) : Well, it didn't pay.

JOPP : Ah ! then you had to turn your attention to something else.

DETHIC (*trying to brazen it out*) : Look here, let's understand one another, professor.

JOPP : Just so, *professor,* let us.

DETHIC (*very firmly*) : Because I am a conjurer is no reason that I'm not an honest man.

JOPP : No, there must be some other reason for that.

DETHIC : Eh ?

JOPP : What made you take the name of Dethic ?

DETHIC : Well, I had to take some name, and I—I thought Dethic was a very good one.

JOPP : Capital name ! (*Comes up to him ; winks at him again. Very good-humoured, very quiet, coaxing tone.*) How did you manage to get the food to her for the first twelve days, eh ?

DETHIC (*loud—angry*) : How dare you infer—how dare you infer—

JOPP (*very quiet and good tempered*) : Come, come, no secrets from a brother professor, you know. Besides—(*Quiet, genial whisper.*)—I've got the man who made you the key.

DETHIC (*turns very pale*) : No !

JOPP : Yes, I have. Tozer, you know.

DETHIC : Got him—where ?

JOPP : He's here in the village.

DETHIC (*collapses. Very humbly*) : Oh, professor, you won't be hard on—on—

JOPP : On a brother professor ? No. I'm going to let you and your daughter off scot-free.

DETHIC (*overjoyed*) : What ! You are ! Upon my word you're really the noblest man I ever met in all my life.

JOPP : On one condition.

DETHIC : Anything—anything. I accept it, whatever it is. I'm so grateful to you there's nothing I wouldn't do for you.

JOPP : You sail straight away to-morrow for America or Australia.

DETHIC : Either ! America or Australia, whichever you please—it's immaterial. Anything else, professor ?

JOPP : You stay there for the rest of your life.

DETHIC : I will. I give you my word of honour I will. Anything else, professor ?

JOPP : Yes. As I am deprived of the pleasure of dusting your jacket in public, I really must indulge myself in the luxury of telling you in private that you are one of the most rascally humbugs, impostors, liars, thieves, and swindlers that I have ever met ! And you may thank your lucky stars that the state of Lady Eve's health doesn't allow me to expose you as you deserve, you blackguard. [*Very passionately.*

DETHIC (*takes it very calmly. After a pause*) : Anything else, professor ?

JOPP : Nothing else, *professor.*

DETHIC : Then I suppose I may take the liberty of saying *au revoir.*

JOPP : You may take the further liberty of saying adieu.

DETHIC : I will. Adieu, professor. [*Exit.*

Enter JUDAH *at window.*

JUDAH (*intensely calm*) : Lord Asgarby asked me to wait for him here.

JOPP : He is in the next room, I believe. Mr. Llewellyn ; I find I am mistaken about Miss Dethic.

JUDAH : Mistaken !

JOPP : I have no evidence against her. I wish you and your bride a happy future.

JUDAH (*calm, dreamy, absorbed*) : Yes, our future will be happy.

JOPP : You have every reason to think so. Mr. Dethic will leave the country, and you will begin your new life without a cloud.

JUDAH : Yes. Without a cloud !

JOPP (*noticing* JUDAH's *abstraction*) : I say that, so far as I am concerned, Miss Dethic will be quite safe.

JUDAH : Thank you. Yes, she will be quite safe.

JOPP : After all, there's not one of us that dares to have all his life stripped bare.

JUDAH (*turns and looks at him*) : You think not ? Do you suppose there is anything in my past life, I would not show to you and to all the world, when it is already known where no secrets can be hidden ?

JOPP : You are lucky if you have no such secrets, Mr. Llewellyn.

JUDAH : I have none. I have nothing that I dare to hide.

JOPP : I congratulate you.

LORD A. *enters, followed by* MR. *and* MRS. PRALL.

LORD A. : Ah ! (*Calling off.*) Will you all come this way, please ?

Enter MORSON *and* GRANGER *with papers, followed by* PAPWORTHY *and two other* TRUSTEES.

LORD A. : Now, Granger, the deed of gift. (GRANGER *gives him deed.*) And, Morson, will you bring the plans of the new building ? Where is Miss Dethic ?

JUDAH : She is waiting on the terrace outside. I'll fetch her.

[*Exit* JUDAH. *He returns in a few minutes with* VASHTI, *who is deeply affected, trembling, ashamed.*

LORD A. : Papworthy, I shall want you and your brother trustees to execute the deed. Is it all prepared ?

PAP. : Everything. There is nothing to do but to sign.

Enter JUDAH *and* VASHTI.

JUDAH (*speaking in a low tone to her*) : Have courage ! It will soon be over.

LORD A. : Miss Dethic, Mr. Llewellyn, I have to beg your acceptance of a marriage present from Lady Eve and myself— the grounds on which your present church is built, £ 20,000 for rebuilding it according to the plans that Mr. Morson has prepared, and an endowment for the living while you shall be its minister. Will you look over the deed ? (*Giving it to him.*) Lady Eve will be here in a minute.

JUDAH : Miss Dethic has something to say first. (*To* VASHTI.) Speak ! Don't be afraid. A few bold words and all is over. Speak ! I am beside you. Nothing can harm you—speak ! [*Pause.*

VASHTI (*speaks in a low, ashamed voice*) : Lord Asgarby, you do not know me. I have deceived you and Lady Eve. I came into your house to deceive you— I have deceived all who believe in me. I have no supernatural powers. It has been all a pretence—a falsehood from beginning to end. (*Turns to* JUDAH.) I have said it—now let me go.

JUDAH (*taking her hand*) : Stay ! I have my share of the burden to bear.

VASHTI : No, no ! You shall not ! Why should you sacrifice yourself ! Lord Asgarby, do not hear him. It was his love for me that blinded him. He is worthy of your gift and of your friendship. Give them to him, and—think no more of me.

JUDAH : No, your guilt is mine. I claim my share of it. (*To* JOPP.) Put the oath to me again that you put that night.

JOPP : What do you mean ?

JUDAH : Ask me if I knew her deceit—if I helped her to deceive. Do you hear ? Quick ! I can't sleep at nights. I've not had one moment's rest since. My food is bitter ! My conscience burns me ! Oh, quench this fire ! Do you hear ? Put me to my oath.

JOPP : Is it possible !

JUDAH : You won't ? Then hear me, hear me, all of you ! I lied ! I lied ! Take back my false oath ; let the truth return to my lips ! Let my heart find peace, and my eyelids sleep again ! You all know me now for what I am ; let all who honoured me and followed me know me too. Hide nothing ! Let it be blazed

about the city. (*To* LORD A.) Take back your gift. (*Gives deed to* LORD A.) We will take nothing from you ! Nothing ! Nothing ! (*Goes to* VASHTI.) It's done ! (*Takes her hand.*) Our path is straight now ; we can walk safely all our lives. [*Taking her up stage.*

LORD A. : But your future—what will you do ?

JUDAH : Leave this place, and work out our repentance together in some place where we are not known.

JOPP : No, Mr. Llewellyn. You have conquered yourself. Stay here, live down your fault, amongst the people whom you have deceived. You shall have one true friend as often as I am here.

LORD A. : And you shall have another friend in me.

JUDAH : Vashti, dare you stay here ? dare you face those who know you ?

VASHTI (*looking at him*) : With you, yes.

JUDAH : Let it be so. But I am not fit to lead. I resign my ministry, but we'll stay here and win back the trust and the respect of those who know us.

JOPP : Bravo !

LADY EVE *runs on.*

LADY E. (*comes down to* VASHTI) : Why didn't you tell me you were ready ? Where are the deeds ? Are they signed ?

JUDAH : No, Lady Eve ; there was a mistake in the title-deeds. The building-stones were not sound. There is to be no new church. (LADY EVE *shows great disappointment.*) Yes, we will build our new church with our lives, and its foundation shall be the truth.

CURTAIN.

1892

LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN

A PLAY ABOUT A GOOD WOMAN

(By OSCAR WILDE)

It is certainly not sincerity that ensures the immortality of Oscar O'Flahertie Fingal Wills Wilde (1850–1900). " In all important matters, style, not sincerity, is the essential," was one of his favourite maxims. In point of style, it is the obvious thing to record that he restores the line that ended with Farquhar, and again with Sheridan. But there was wanting in him an essential simplicity that is found as well in these forerunners as in the most " barbarous " of the Elizabethans ; and, in its place, the affectations of the Comedy of Manners are developed to a degree that, to say the least of it, is over-civilized. The poses of Mirabel and Millamant are relatively childlike. No-one could call Wilde's poses childlike. There is in him something of the subtlety of the proverbial East—something we do not trust. The English drama that we have traced from the days of the Mystery could not have followed his lead, and remained English drama. As a matter of history, just before the close of the year (1892) that saw the brilliant and triumphant production at the St. James's Theatre of this, the first of his five finished plays, an obscure " Independent Theatre Society " gave a single performance of a first play called *Widowers' Houses* by yet another witty Irishman, and was generally pooh-poohed for its pains.

Oscar Wilde became the most popular playwright of the day ; the other Irishman, in so far as he counted as a playwright at all, the most unpopular. The tale of the two Irishmen is not without its point. After a few hectic years, Oscar's star was eclipsed ; after many more years, English drama was reborn, and, in the process, we have learned to trust, as we are learning, within necessary limits, to follow, one who, in his own fashion, has demonstrated a true word spoken (not by himself) in jest : anent the importance of being earnest.

In *Lady Windermere's Fan*, as in *An Ideal Husband* and *A Woman of no Importance* a sentimental interest is grafted very skilfully on to the characteristic comic pose. Only in *The Importance of Being Earnest* was Wilde continuously in his comic element. *Salome* exposes the other side of the medal. Brilliant is the word for all these plays. If the old order had to give place to a new, at least Oscar Wilde enabled it to retire, not merely with credit, but in a blaze of glory.

LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN

A Play about a Good Woman

(IN FOUR ACTS)

Characters

LORD WINDERMERE	THE DUCHESS OF BERWICK
LORD DARLINGTON	LADY AGATHA CARLISLE
LORD AUGUSTUS LORTON	LADY PLYMDALE
MR. DUMBY	LADY STUTFIELD
MR. CECIL GRAHAM	LADY JEDBURGH
MR. HOPPER	MRS. COWPER-COWPER
PARKER, *butler*	MRS. ERLYNNE
LADY WINDERMERE	ROSALIE, *maid*

The action of the play takes place within twenty-four hours, beginning on a Tuesday afternoon at five o'clock, and ending the next day at 1.30 p.m.

ACT I

Morning-room of LORD WINDERMERE'S *house in Carlton House Terrace. Doors C. and R. Bureau with books and papers R. Sofa with small tea-table L, Window opening on to terrace L. Table R.*

LADY WINDERMERE *is at table R., arranging roses in a blue bowl.*

Enter PARKER.

PARKER : Is your ladyship at home this afternoon ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes—who has called ?

PARKER : Lord Darlington, my lady.

LADY WINDERMERE (*hesitates for a moment*) : Show him up—and I'm at home to any one who calls.

PARKER : Yes, my lady. [*Exit C.*

LADY WINDERMERE : It's best for me to see him before to-night. I'm glad he's come.

Enter PARKER *C.*

PARKER : Lord Darlington.

Enter LORD DARLINGTON *C.*

[*Exit* PARKER.

LORD DARLINGTON : How do you do, Lady Windermere ?

LADY WINDERMERE. : How do you do, Lord Darlington ? No, I can't shake hands with you. My hands are all wet with these roses. Aren't they lovely ? They came up from Selby this morning.

LORD DARLINGTON : They are quite perfect. (*Sees a fan lying on the table.*) And what a wonderful fan ! May I look at it ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Do. Pretty, isn't it ! It's got my name on it, and everything. I have only just seen it myself. It's my husband's birthday present to me. You know to-day is my birthday ?

LORD DARLINGTON : No ? Is it really ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes, I'm of age to-day. Quite an important day in my life, isn't it ? That is why I am giving this party to-night. Do sit down. (*Still arranging flowers.*)

LORD DARLINGTON (*sitting down*) : I wish I had known it was your birthday, Lady Windermere. I would have covered the whole street in front of your house with flowers for you to walk on. They are made for you.

[*A short pause.*

LADY WINDERMERE : Lord Darlington, you annoyed me last night at the Foreign Office. I am afraid you are going to annoy me again.

LORD DARLINGTON : I, Lady Windermere ?

Enter PARKER *and* FOOTMAN *C., with tray and tea things.*

LADY WINDERMERE : Put it there, Parker. That will do. (*Wipes her hands with her pocket-handkerchief, goes to tea-table L., and sits down.*) Won't you come over, Lord Darlington.

[*Exit* PARKER *C.*

LORD DARLINGTON (*takes chair and goes across L.C.*) : I am quite miserable, Lady Windermere. You must tell me what I did. [*Sits down at table L.*

LADY WINDERMERE : Well, you kept paying me elaborate compliments the whole evening.

LORD DARLINGTON (*smiling*) : Ah, nowadays we are all of us so hard up, that the only pleasant things to pay *are* compliments. They're the only things we *can* pay.

LADY WINDERMERE (*shaking her head.*) : No, I am talking very seriously. You mustn't laugh, I am quite serious. I don't like compliments, and I don't see why a man should think he is pleasing a woman enormously when he says to her a whole heap of things that he doesn't mean.

LORD DARLINGTON : Ah, but I did mean them. [*Takes tea which she offers him.*

LADY WINDERMERE (*gravely*) : I hope not. I should be sorry to have to quarrel with you, Lord Darlington. I like you very much, you know that. But I shouldn't like you at all if I thought you were what most other men are. Believe me, you are better than most other men, and I sometimes think you pretend to be worse.

LORD DARLINGTON : We all have our little vanities, Lady Windermere.

LADY WINDERMERE : Why do you make that your special one ? (*Still seated at table L.*)

LORD DARLINGTON (*still seated L.C.*) : Oh, nowadays so many conceited people go about Society pretending to be good, that I think it shows rather a sweet and modest disposition to pretend to be bad. Besides, there is this to be said. If you pretend to be good, the world takes you very seriously. If you pretend to be bad, it doesn't. Such is the astounding stupidity of optimism.

LADY WINDERMERE : Don't you *want* the world to take you seriously then, Lord Darlington ?

LORD DARLINGTON : No, not the world. Who are the people the world takes seriously ? All the dull people one can think of, from the Bishops down to the bores. I should like *you* to take me very seriously, Lady Windermere, *you* more than any one else in life.

LADY WINDERMERE : Why—why me ?

LORD DARLINGTON (*after a slight hesitation*) : Because I think we might be great friends. Let us be great friends. You may want a friend some day.

LADY WINDERMERE : Why do you say that ?

LORD DARLINGTON : Oh !—we all want friends at times.

LADY WINDERMERE : I think we're very good friends already, Lord Darlington. We can always remain so as long as you don't——

LORD DARLINGTON : Don't what ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Don't spoil it by saying extravagant silly things to me. You think I am a Puritan, I suppose ? Well, I have something of the Puritan in me. I was brought up like that. I am glad of it. My mother died when I was a mere child. I lived always with Lady Julia, my father's elder sister, you know. She was stern to me, but she taught me what the world is forgetting, the difference that there is between what is right and what is wrong. *She* allowed of no compromise. *I* allow of none.

LORD DARLINGTON : My dear Lady Windermere !

LADY WINDERMERE (*leaning back on the sofa*) : You look on me as being behind the age.—Well, I am ! I should be sorry to be on the same level as an age like this.

LORD DARLINGTON : You think the age very bad ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes. Nowadays people seem to look on life as a speculation. It is not a speculation. It is a sacrament. Its ideal is Love. Its purification is sacrifice.

LORD DARLINGTON (*smiling*) : Oh, anything is better than being sacrificed !

LADY WINDERMERE (*leaning forward*) : Don't say that.

LORD DARLINGTON : I do say it. I feel it—I know it.

Enter PARKER *C.*

PARKER : The men want to know if they are to put the carpets on the terrace for to-night, my lady ?

LADY WINDERMERE : You don't think it will rain, Lord Darlington, do you ?

LORD DARLINGTON : I won't hear of its raining on your birthday.

LADY WINDERMERE : Tell them to do it at once, Parker. [*Exit* PARKER *C.*

LORD DARLINGTON (*still seated*) : Do you think then—of course I am only putting an imaginary instance—do you think that in the case of a young married couple, say about two years married, if the husband suddenly becomes the intimate friend of a woman of—well, more than doubtful character—is always calling upon her, lunching with her, and probably paying her bills—do you think that the wife should not console herself ?

LADY WINDERMERE (*frowning*) : Console herself ?

LORD DARLINGTON : Yes, I think she should—I think she has the right.

LADY WINDERMERE : Because the husband is vile—should the wife be vile also ?

LORD DARLINGTON : Vileness is a terrible word, Lady Windermere.

LADY WINDERMERE : It is a terrible thing, Lord Darlington.

LORD DARLINGTON : Do you know I am afraid that good people do a great deal of harm in this world. Certainly the greatest harm they do is that they make badness of such extraordinary importance. It is absurd to divide people into good and bad. People are either charming or tedious. I take the side of the charming, and you, Lady Windermere, can't help belonging to them.

LADY WINDERMERE : Now, Lord Darlington. (*Rising and crossing R., front of him.*) Don't stir, I am merely going to finish my flowers. [*Goes to table R.C.*

LORD DARLINGTON (*rising and moving chair*) : And I must say I think you are very hard on modern life, Lady Windermere. Of course there is much against it, I admit. Most women, for instance, nowadays, are rather mercenary.

LADY WINDERMERE : Don't talk about such people.

LORD DARLINGTON : Well then, setting aside mercenary people, who, of course, are dreadful, do you think seriously that women who have committed what the world calls a fault should never be forgiven ?

LADY WINDERMERE (*standing at table*) : I think they should never be forgiven.

LORD DARLINGTON : And men ? Do you think that there should be the same laws for men as there are for women ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Certainly !

LORD DARLINGTON : I think life too complex a thing to be settled by these hard and fast rules.

LADY WINDERMERE : If we had 'these hard and fast rules,' we should find life much more simple.

LORD DARLINGTON : You allow of no exceptions ?

LADY WINDERMERE : None !

LORD DARLINGTON : Ah, what a fascinating Puritan you are, Lady Windermere !

LADY WINDERMERE : The adjective was unnecessary, Lord Darlington.

LORD DARLINGTON : I couldn't help it. I can resist everything except temptation.

LADY WINDERMERE : You have the modern affectation of weakness.

LORD DARLINGTON (*looking at her*) : It's only an affectation, Lady Windermere.

Enter PARKER *C.*

PARKER : The Duchess of Berwick and Lady Agatha Carlisle.

Enter the DUCHESS OF BERWICK *and* LADY AGATHA CARLISLE *C.*

[*Exit* PARKER *C.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*coming down C., and shaking hands*) : Dear Margaret, I am so pleased to see you. You remember Agatha, don't you ? (*Crossing L.C.*) How do you do, Lord Darlington ? I won't let you know my daughter, you are far too wicked.

LORD DARLINGTON : Don't say that, Duchess. As a wicked man I am a complete failure. Why, there are lots of people who say I have never really done anything wrong in the whole course of my life. Of course they only say it behind my back.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Isn't he dreadful ? Agatha, this is Lord Darlington. Mind you don't believe a word he says. (LORD DARLINGTON *crosses R.C.*) No, no tea, thank you, dear. (*Crosses and sits on sofa.*) We have just had tea at Lady Markby's. Such bad tea, too. It was quite undrinkable. I wasn't at all surprised. Her own son-in-law supplies it. Agatha is looking forward so much to your ball to-night, dear Margaret.

LADY WINDERMERE (*seated L.C.*) : Oh, you mustn't think it is going to be a ball, Duchess. It is only a dance in honour of my birthday. A small and early.

LORD DARLINGTON (*standing L. C.*) : Very small, very early, and very select, Duchess.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*on sofa L.*) : Of course it's going to be select. But we know *that*, dear Margaret, about *your* house. It is really one of the few houses in London where I can take Agatha, and where I feel perfectly secure about dear Berwick. I don't know what society is coming to. The most dreadful people seem to go everywhere. They certainly come to my parties—the men get quite furious if one doesn't ask them. Really, some one should make a stand against it.

LADY WINDERMERE : *I* will, Duchess. I will have no one in my house about whom there is any scandal.

LORD DARLINGTON (*R.C.*) : Oh, don't say that, Lady Windermere. I should never be admitted ! [*Sitting.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Oh, men don't matter. With women it is different. We're good. Some of us are, at least. But we are positively getting elbowed into the corner. Our husbands would really forget our existence if we didn't nag at them from time to time, just to remind them that we have a perfect legal right to do so.

LORD DARLINGTON : It's a curious thing, Duchess, about the game of marriage —a game, by the way, that is going out of fashion—the wives hold all the honours, and invariably lose the odd trick.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : The odd trick ? Is that the husband, Lord Darlington ?

LORD DARLINGTON : It would be rather a good name for the modern husband.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Dear Lord Darlington, how thoroughly depraved you are !

LADY WINDERMERE : Lord Darlington is trivial.

LORD DARLINGTON : Ah, don't say that, Lady Windermere.

LADY WINDERMERE : Why do you *talk* so trivally about life, then ?

LORD DARLINGTON : Because I think that life is far too important a thing ever to talk seriously about it. [*Moves up C.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : What does he mean ? Do, as a concession to my poor wits, Lord Darlington, just explain to me what you really mean.

LORD DARLINGTON (*coming down back of table*) : I think I had better not, Duchess. Nowadays to be intelligible is to be found out. Good-bye ! (*Shakes hands with* DUCHESS.) And now—(*goes up stage*) Lady Windermere, good-bye. I may come to-night, mayn't I ? Do let me come.

LADY WINDERMERE (*standing up stage with* LORD DARLINGTON) : Yes, certainly. But you are not to say foolish, insincere things to people.

LORD DARLINGTON (*smiling*) : Ah ! you are beginning to reform me. It is a dangerous thing to reform any one, Lady Windermere. [*Bows, and exit C.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*who has risen, goes C.*) : What a charming, wicked creature. I like him so much. I'm quite delighted he's gone ! How sweet you're looking ! Where *do* you get your gowns ? And now I must tell you how sorry I am for you, dear Margaret. (*Crosses to sofa and sits with* LADY WINDERMERE.) Agatha, darling !

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma. [*Rises.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Will you go and look over the photograph album that I see there ?

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma. [*Goes to table up L.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Dear girl ! She is so fond of photographs of Switzerland. Such a pure taste, I think. But I really am so sorry for you, Margaret.

LADY WINDERMERE (*smiling*) : Why, Duchess ?

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Oh, on account of that horrid woman. She dresses so well, too, which makes it much worse, sets such a dreadful example. Augustus —you know my disreputable brother—such a trial to us all—well, Augustus is completely infatuated about her. It is quite scandalous, for she is absolutely inadmissible into society. Many a woman has a past, but I am told that she has at least a dozen, and that they all fit.

LADY WINDERMERE : Whom are you talking about, Duchess ?

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : About Mrs. Erlynne.

LADY WINDERMERE : Mrs. Erlynne ? I never heard of her, Duchess. And what *has* she to do with me ?

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : My poor child ! Agatha, darling !

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Will you go out on the terrace and look at the sunset ?

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma. [*Exit through window, L.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Sweet girl ! So devoted to sunsets ! Shows such refinement of feeling, does it not ? After all, there is nothing like Nature, is there ?

LADY WINDERMERE : But what is it, Duchess ? Why do you talk to me about this person ?

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Don't you really know ? I assure you we're all so distressed about it. Only last night at dear Lady Jansen's every one was saying how extraordinary it was that, of all men in London, Windermere should behave in such a way.

LADY WINDERMERE : My husband—what has *he* got to do with any woman of that kind ?

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Ah, what indeed, dear ? That is the point. He goes to see her continually, and stops for hours at a time, and while he is there she is not at home to any one. Not that many ladies call on her, dear, but she has a great many disreputable men friends—my own brother particularly, as I told you—and that is what makes it so dreadful about Windermere. We looked upon *him* as being such a model husband, but I am afraid there is no doubt about it. My dear nieces—you know the Saville girls, don't you ?—such nice domestic creatures—plain, dreadfully plain, but so good—well, they're always at the window doing fancy work, and making ugly things for the poor, which I think so useful of them in these dreadful socialistic days, and this terrible woman has taken a house in Curzon Street, right opposite them—such a respectable street too ! I don't know what we're coming to ! And they tell me that Windermere goes there four and five times a week—they *see* him. They can't help it—and although they never talk scandal, they —well, of course—they remark on it to every one. And the worst of it all is that I have been told that this woman has got a great deal of money out of somebody, for it seems that she came to London six months ago without anything at all to speak of, and now she has this charming house in Mayfair, drives her ponies in the Park every afternoon and all—well, all—since she has known poor dear Windermere.

LADY WINDERMERE : Oh, I can't believe it !

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : But it's quite true, my dear. The whole of London knows it. That is why I felt it was better to come and talk to you, and advise you to take Windermere away at once to Homburg or to Aix, where he'll have something to amuse him, and where you can watch him all day long. I assure you, my dear, that on several occasions after I was first married, I had to pretend to be very ill, and was obliged to drink the most unpleasant mineral waters, merely to get Berwick out of town. He was so extremely susceptible. Though I am bound to say he never gave away any large sums of money to anybody. He is far too high-principled for that !

LADY WINDERMERE (*interrupting*) : Duchess, Duchess, it's impossible ! (*Rising and crossing stage to C.*) We are only married two years. Our child is but six months old. [*Sits in chair R. of L. table.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Ah, the dear pretty baby ! How is the little darling ? Is it a boy or a girl ? I hope a girl—Ah, no, I remember it's a boy ! I'm so sorry. Boys are so wicked. My boy is excessively immoral. You wouldn't believe at what hours he comes home. And he's only left Oxford a few months —I really don't know what they teach them there.

LADY WINDERMERE : Are *all* men bad ?

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Oh, all of them, my dear, all of them, without any exception. And they never grow any better. Men become old, but they never become good.

LADY WINDERMERE : Windermere and I married for love.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Yes, we begin like that. It was only Berwick's brutal and incessant threats of suicide that made me accept him at all, and before the year was out, he was running after all kinds of petticoats, every colour, every shape, every material. In fact, before the honeymoon was over, I caught him winking at my maid, a most pretty, respectable girl. I dismissed her at once without a character.—No, I remember I passed her on to my sister ; poor dear Sir George is so short-sighted, I thought it wouldn't matter. But it did, though—it was most unfortunate. (*Rises.*) And now, my dear child, I must go, as we are dining out. And mind you don't take this little aberration of Windermere's too much to heart. Just take him abroad, and he'll come back to you all right.

LADY WINDERMERE : Come back to me ! [*C.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*L.C.*) : Yes, dear, these wicked women get our husbands away from us, but they always come back, slightly damaged, of course. And don't make scenes, men hate them !

LADY WINDERMERE : It is very kind of you, Duchess, to come and tell me all this. But I can't believe that my husband is untrue to me.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Pretty child ! I was like that once. Now I know that all men are monsters. (LADY WINDERMERE *rings bell.*) The only thing to do is to feed the wretches well. A good cook does wonders, and that I know you have. My dear Margaret, you are not going to cry ?

LADY WINDERMERE : You needn't be afraid, Duchess, I never cry.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : That's quite right, dear. Crying is the refuge of plain women but the ruin of pretty ones. Agatha, darling !

LADY AGATHA (*entering L.*) : Yes, mamma. [*Stands back of table L.C.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Come and bid good-bye to Lady Windermere, and thank her for your charming visit. (*Coming down again.*) And by the way, I must thank you for sending a card to Mr. Hopper—he's that rich young Australian people are taking such notice of just at present. His father made a great fortune by selling some kind of food in circular tins—most palatable, I believe—I fancy it is the thing the servants always refuse to eat. But the son is quite interesting. I think he's attracted by dear Agatha's clever talk. Of course, we should be very sorry to lose her, but I think that a mother who doesn't part with a daughter every season has no real affection. We're coming to-night, dear. (PARKER *opens C. doors.*) And remember my advice, take the poor fellow out of town at once, it is the only thing to do. Good-bye, once more ; come, Agatha. [*Exeunt* DUCHESS *and* LADY AGATHA *C.*

LADY WINDERMERE : How horrible ! I understand now what Lord Darlington meant by the imaginary instance of the couple not two years married. Oh ! it can't be true—she spoke of enormous sums of money paid to this woman. I know where Arthur keeps his bank book—in one of the drawers of that desk. I might find out by that. I *will* find out. (*Opens drawer.*) No, it is some hideous mistake. (*Rises and goes C.*) Some silly scandal ! He loves *me* ! He loves *me* ! But why should I not look ? I am his wife, I have a right to look ! (*Returns to bureau, takes out book and examines it page by page, smiles and gives a sigh of relief.*) I knew it ! there is not a word of truth in this stupid story. (*Puts book back in drawer. As she does so, starts and takes out another book.*) A second book—private—locked ! (*Tries to open it, but fails. Sees paper knife on bureau, and with it cuts cover from book. Begins to start at the first page.*) 'Mrs. Erlynne—£600—Mrs. Erlynne—£700—Mrs. Erlynne—£400.' Oh ! it is true ! It is true ! How horrible ! [*Throws book on floor.*

Enter LORD WINDERMERE *C.*

LORD WINDERMERE : Well, dear, has the fan been sent home yet? (*Going R.C. Sees book.*) Margaret, you have cut open my bank book. You have no right to do such a thing!

LADY WINDERMERE : You think it wrong that you are found out, don't you?

LORD WINDERMERE : I think it wrong that a wife should spy on her husband.

LADY WINDERMERE : I did not spy on you. I never knew of this woman's existence till half an hour ago. Some one who pitied me was kind enough to tell me what every one in London knows already—your daily visits to Curzon Street, your mad infatuation, the monstrous sums of money you squander on this infamous woman! [*Crossing L.*

LORD WINDERMERE : Margaret! don't talk like that of Mrs. Erlynne, you don't know how unjust it is!

LADY WINDERMERE (*turning to him*) : You are very jealous of Mrs. Erlynne's honour. I wish you had been as jealous of mine.

LORD WINDERMERE : You honour is untouched, Margaret. You don't think for a moment that—— [*Puts book back into desk.*

LADY WINDERMERE : I think that you spend your money strangely. That is all. Oh, don't imagine I mind about the money. As far as I am concerned, you may squander everything we have. But what I *do* mind is that you who have loved me, you who have taught me to love you, should pass from the love that is given to the love that is bought. Oh, it's horrible! (*Sits on sofa.*) And it is I who feel degraded! *you* don't feel anything. I feel stained, utterly stained. You can't realise how hideous the last six months seems to me now—every kiss you have given me is tainted in my memory.

LORD WINDERMERE (*crossing to her*) : Don't say that, Margaret, I never loved any one in the whole world but you.

LADY WINDERMERE (*rises*) : Who is this woman, then? Why do you take a house for her?

LORD WINDERMERE : I did not take a house for her.

LADY WINDERMERE : You gave her the money to do it, which is the same thing.

LORD WINDERMERE : Margaret, as far as I have known Mrs. Erlynne——

LADY WINDERMERE : Is there a Mr. Erlynne—or is he a myth?

LORD WINDERMERE : Her husband died many years ago. She is alone in the world.

LADY WINDERMERE : No relations? [*A pause.*

LORD WINDERMERE : None.

LADY WINDERMERE : Rather curious, isn't it? [*L.*

LORD WINDERMERE (*L.C.*) : Margaret, I was saying to you—and I beg you to listen to me—that as far as I have known Mrs. Erlynne, she has conducted herself well. If years ago——

LADY WINDERMERE : Oh! (*Crossing R.C.*) I don't want details about her life!

LORD WINDERMERE (*C.*) : I am not going to give you any details about her life. I tell you simply this—Mrs. Erlynne was once honoured, loved, respected. She was well born, she had position—she lost everything—threw it away, if you like. That makes it all the more bitter. Misfortunes one can endure—they come from outside, they are accidents. But to suffer for one's own faults—ah!—there is the sting of life. It was twenty years ago, too. She was little more than a girl then. She had been a wife for even less time than you have.

LADY WINDERMERE : I am not interested in her—and—you should not mention this woman and me in the same breath. It is an error of taste. (*Sitting R. at desk.*)

LORD WINDERMERE : Margaret, you could save this woman. She wants to get back into society, and she wants you to help her. [*Crossing to her.*

LADY WINDERMERE : Me !

LORD WINDERMERE : Yes, you.

LADY WINDERMERE : How impertinent of her ! [*A pause.*

LORD WINDERMERE : Margaret, I came to ask you a great favour, and I still ask it of you, though you have discovered what I had intended you should never have known, that I have given Mrs. Erlynne a large sum of money. I want you to send her an invitation for our party to-night. (*Standing L. of her.*)

LADY WINDERMERE : You are mad ! [*Rises.*

LORD WINDERMERE : I entreat you. People may chatter about her, do chatter about her, of course, but they don't know anything definite against her. She has been to several houses—not to houses where you would go, I admit, but still to houses where women who are in what is called Society nowadays do go. That does not content her. She wants you to receive her once.

LADY WINDERMERE : As a triumph for her, I suppose ?

LORD WINDERMERE : No ; but because she knows that you are a good woman—and that if she comes here once she will have a chance of a happier, a surer life than she has had. She will make no further effort to know you. Won't you help a woman who is trying to get back ?

LADY WINDERMERE : No ! If a woman really repents, she never wishes to return to the society that has made or seen her ruin.

LORD WINDERMERE : I beg of you.

LADY WINDERMERE (*crossing to door R.*) : I am going to dress for dinner, and don't mention the subject again this evening. Arthur (*going to him C.*), you fancy because I have no father or mother that I am alone in the world, and that you can treat me as you choose. You are wrong, I have friends, many friends.

LORD WINDERMERE (*L.C.*) : Margaret, you are talking foolishly, recklessly. I won't argue with you, but I insist upon your asking Mrs. Erlynne to-night.

LADY WINDERMERE (*R.C.*) : I shall do nothing of the kind. [*Crossing L.C.*

LORD WINDERMERE : You refuse ? [*C.*

LADY WINDERMERE : Absolutely !

LORD WINDERMERE : Ah, Margaret, do this for my sake ; it is her last chance.

LADY WINDERMERE : What has that to do with me ?

LORD WINDERMERE : How hard good women are !

LADY WINDERMERE : How weak bad men are !

LORD WINDERMERE : Margaret, none of us men may be good enough for the women we marry—that is quite true—but you don't imagine I would ever—oh, the suggestion is monstrous !

LADY WINDERMERE : Why should *you* be different from other men ? I am told that there is hardly a husband in London who does not waste his life over *some* shameful passion.

LORD WINDERMERE : I am not one of them.

LADY WINDERMERE : I am not sure of that !

LORD WINDERMERE : You are sure in your heart. But don't make chasm after chasm between us. God knows the last few minutes have thrust us wide enough apart. Sit down and write the card.

LADY WINDERMERE : Nothing in the whole world would induce me.

LORD WINDERMERE (*crossing to bureau*) : Then I will ! (*Rings electric bell, sits and writes card.*)

LADY WINDERMERE : You are going to invite this woman ? [*Crossing to him.*

LORD WINDERMERE : Yes. [*Pause.*

Enter PARKER.

Parker !

PARKER : Yes, my lord. [*Comes down L.C.*

LORD WINDERMERE : Have this note sent to Mrs. Erlynne at No. 84A Curzon Street. (*Crossing to L.C. and giving note to* PARKER.) There is no answer ! [*Exit* PARKER *C.*

LADY WINDERMERE : Arthur, if that woman comes here, I shall insult her.

LORD WINDERMERE : Margaret, don't say that.

LADY WINDERMERE : I mean it.

LORD WINDERMERE : Child, if you did such a thing, there's not a woman in London who wouldn't pity you.

LADY WINDERMERE : There is not a *good* woman in London who would not applaud me. We have been too lax. We must make an example. I propose to begin to-night. (*Picking up fan.*) Yes, you gave me this fan to-day ; it was your birthday present. If that woman crosses my threshold, I shall strike her across the face with it.

LORD WINDERMERE : Margaret, you couldn't do such a thing.

LADY WINDERMERE : You don't know me ! [*Moves R.*

Enter PARKER.

Parker !

PARKER : Yes, my lady.

LADY WINDERMERE : I shall dine in my own room. I don't want dinner, in fact. See that everything is ready by half-past ten. And, Parker, be sure you pronounce the names of the guests very distinctly to-night. Sometimes you speak so fast that I miss them. I am particularly anxious to hear the names quite clearly, so as to make no mistake. You understand, Parker ?

PARKER : Yes, my lady.

LADY WINDERMERE : That will do ! [*Exit* PARKER *C.* (*Speaking to* LORD WINDERMERE.) Arthur, if that woman comes here—I warn you——

LORD WINDERMERE : Margaret, you'll ruin us !

LADY WINDERMERE : Us ! From this moment my life is separate from yours. But if you wish to avoid a public scandal, write at once to this woman, and tell her that I forbid her to come here !

LORD WINDERMERE : I will not—I cannot—she must come !

LADY WINDERMERE : Then I shall do exactly as I have said. (*Goes R.*) You leave me no choice. [*Exit R.*

LORD WINDERMERE (*calling after her*) : Margaret ! Margaret ! (*A pause.*) My God ! What shall I do ? I dare not tell her who this woman really is. The shame would kill her. [*Sinks down into a chair and buries his face in his hands.*

ACT II

Drawing-room in LORD WINDERMERE'S *house. Door R.U. opening into ball-room, where band is playing. Door L. through which guests are entering. Door L. U. opens on to illuminated terrace. Palms, flowers, and brilliant lights. Room crowded with guests.* LADY WINDERMERE *is receiving them.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*up C.*) : So strange Lord Windermere isn't here. Mr. Hopper is very late, too. You have kept those five dances for him, Agatha ? [*Comes down.*

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*sitting on sofa*) : Just let me see your card. I'm so glad Lady Windermere has revived cards.—They're a mother's only safeguard.

You dear simple little thing ! (*Scratches out two names.*) No nice girl should ever waltz with such particularly younger sons ! It looks so fast ! The last two dances you might pass on the terrace with Mr. Hopper.

Enter MR. DUMBY *and* LADY PLYMDALE *from the ball-room.*

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*fanning herself*) : The air is so pleasant there.

PARKER : Mrs. Cowper-Cowper. Lady Stutfield. Sir James Royston. Mr. Guy Berkeley.

These people enter as announced.

DUMBY : Good evening, Lady Stutfield. I suppose this will be the last ball of the season ?

LADY STUTFIELD : I suppose so, Mr. Dumby. It's been a delightful season, hasn't it ?

DUMBY : Quite delightful ! Good evening, Duchess. I suppose this will be the last ball of the season ?

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : I suppose so, Mr. Dumby. It has been a very dull season, hasn't it ?

DUMBY : Dreadfully dull ! Dreadfully dull !

MRS. COWPER-COWPER : Good evening, Mr. Dumby. I suppose this will be the last ball of the season ?

DUMBY : Oh, I think not. There'll probably be two more.

[*Wanders back to* LADY PLYMDALE.

PARKER : Mr. Rufford. Lady Jedburgh and Miss Graham. Mr. Hopper.

These people enter as announced.

HOPPER : How do you do, Lady Windermere ? How do you do, Duchess ?

[*Bows to* LADY AGATHA.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Dear Mr. Hopper, how nice of you to come so early. We all know how you are run after in London.

HOPPER : Capital place, London ! They are not nearly so exclusive in London as they are in Sydney.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Ah ! we know your value, Mr. Hopper. We wish there were more like you. It would make life so much easier. Do you know, Mr. Hopper, dear Agatha and I are so much interested in Australia. It must be so pretty with all the dear little kangaroos flying about. Agatha has found it on the map. What a curious shape it is ! Just like a large packing case. However, it is a very young country, isn't it ?

HOPPER : Wasn't it made at the same time as the others, Duchess ?

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : How clever you are, Mr. Hopper. You have a cleverness quite of your own. Now I mustn't keep you.

HOPPER : But I should like to dance with Lady Agatha, Duchess.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Well, I *hope* she has a dance left. Have you a dance left, Agatha ?

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : The next one ?

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma.

HOPPER : May I have the pleasure ? [LADY AGATHA *bows.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Mind you take great care of my little chatterbox, Mr. Hopper. [LADY AGATHA *and* MR. HOPPER *pass into ball-room.*

Enter LORD WINDERMERE *L.*

LORD WINDERMERE : Margaret, I want to speak to you.

LADY WINDERMERE : In a moment. (*The music stops.*)

PARKER : Lord Augustus Lorton.

Enter LORD AUGUSTUS.

LORD AUGUSTUS : Good evening, Lady Windermere.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Sir James, will you take me into the ball-room? Augustus has been dining with us to-night. I really have had quite enough of dear Augustus for the moment.

[SIR JAMES ROYSTON *gives the* DUCHESS *his arm and escorts her into the ball-room.*

PARKER : Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Bowden. Lord and Lady Paisley. Lord Darlington.

These people enter as announced.

LORD AUGUSTUS (*coming up to* LORD WINDERMERE) : Want to speak to you particularly, dear boy. I'm worn to a shadow. Know I don't look it. None of us men do look what we really are. Demmed good thing, too. What I want to know is this. Who is she? Where does she come from? Why hasn't she got any demmed relations? Demmed nuisance, relations! But they make one so demmed respectable.

LORD WINDERMERE : You are talking of Mrs. Erlynne, I suppose? I only met her six months ago. Till then, I never knew of her existence.

LORD AUGUSTUS : You have seen a good deal of her since then.

LORD WINDERMERE (*coldly*) : Yes, I have seen a good deal of her since then. I have just seen her.

LORD AUGUSTUS : Egad! the women are very down on her. I have been dining with Arabella this evening! By Jove! you should have heard what she said about Mrs. Erlynne. She didn't leave a rag on her. . . . (*Aside.*) Berwick and I told her that didn't matter much, as the lady in question must have an extremely fine figure. You should have seen Arabella's expression! . . . But, look here, dear boy. I don't know what to do about Mrs. Erlynne. Egad! I might be married to her; she treats me with such demmed indifference. She's deuced clever, too! She explains everything. Egad! she explains you. She has got any amount of explanations for you—and all of them different.

LORD WINDERMERE : No explanations are necessary about my friendship with Mrs. Erlynne.

LORD AUGUSTUS : Hem! Well, look here, dear old fellow. Do you think she will ever get into this demmed thing called Society? Would you introduce her to your wife? No use beating about the confounded bush. Would you do that?

LORD WINDERMERE : Mrs. Erlynne is coming here to-night.

LORD AUGUSTUS : Your wife has sent her a card?

LORD WINDERMERE : Mrs. Erlynne has received a card.

LORD AUGUSTUS : Then she's all right, dear boy. But why didn't you tell me that before? It would have saved me a heap of worry and demmed misunderstandings!

[LADY AGATHA *and* MR. HOPPER *cross and exit on terrace L.U.E.*

PARKER : Mr. Cecil Graham!

Enter MR. CECIL GRAHAM.

CECIL GRAHAM (*bows to* LADY WINDERMERE, *passes over and shakes hands with* LORD WINDERMERE) : Good evening, Arthur. Why don't you ask me how

I am? I like people to ask me how I am. It shows a wide-spread interest in my health. Now, to-night I am not at all well. Been dining with my people. Wonder why it is one's people are always so tedious? My father would talk morality after dinner. I told him he was old enough to know better. But my experience is that as soon as people are old enough to know better, they don't know anything at all. Hullo, Tuppy! Hear you're going to be married again: thought you were tired of that game

LORD AUGUSTUS: You're excessively trivial, my dear boy, excessively trivial!

CECIL GRAHAM: By the way, Tuppy, which is it? Have you been twice married and once divorced, or twice divorced and once married? I say you've been twice divorced and once married. It seems so much more probable.

LORD AUGUSTUS: I have a very bad memory. I really don't remember which.

[*Moves away R.*

LADY PLYMDALE: Lord Windermere, I've something most particular to ask you.

LORD WINDERMERE: I am afraid—if you will excuse me—I must join my wife.

LADY PLYMDALE: Oh, you mustn't dream of such a thing. It's most dangerous nowadays for a husband to pay any attention to his wife in public. It always makes people think that he beats her when they're alone. The world has grown so suspicious of anything that looks like a happy married life. But I'll tell you what it is at supper. [*Moves towards door of ball-room.*

LORD WINDERMERE (*C.*): Margaret! I *must* speak to you.

LADY WINDERMERE: Will you hold my fan for me, Lord Darlington? Thanks.

[*Comes down to him.*

LORD WINDERMERE (*crossing to her*): Margaret, what you said before dinner was, of course, impossible?

LADY WINDERMERE: That woman is not coming here to-night.

LORD WINDERMERE (*R.C.*): Mrs. Erlynne is coming here, and if you in any way annoy or wound her, you will bring shame and sorrow on us both. Remember that! Ah, Margaret! only trust me! A wife should trust her husband!

LADY WINDERMERE (*C.*): London is full of women who trust their husbands. One can always recognise them. They look so thoroughly unhappy. I am not going to be one of them. (*Moves up.*) Lord Darlington, will you give me back my fan, please? Thanks. . . . A useful thing a fan, isn't it? . . . I want a friend to-night, Lord Darlington: I didn't know I would want one so soon.

LORD DARLINGTON: Lady Windermere! I knew the time would come some day; but why to-night?

LORD WINDERMERE: I *will* tell her. I must. It would be terrible if there were any scene. Margaret . . .

PARKER: Mrs. Erlynne!

LORD WINDERMERE *starts.* MRS. ERLYNNE *enters, very beautifully dressed and very dignified.* LADY WINDERMERE *clutches at her fan, then lets it drop on the floor. She bows coldly to* MRS. ERLYNNE, *who bows to her sweetly in turn, and sails into the room.*

LORD DARLINGTON: You have dropped your fan, Lady Windermere.

[*Picks it up and hands it to her.*

MRS. ERLYNNE (*C.*): How do you do, again, Lord Windermere? How charming your sweet wife looks! Quite a picture!

LORD WINDERMERE (*in a low voice*): It was terribly rash of you to come!

MRS. ERLYNNE (*smiling*): The wisest thing I ever did in my life. And, by the way, you must pay me a good deal of attention this evening. I am afraid of the women. You must introduce me to some of them. The men I can always manage. How do you do, Lord Augustus? You have quite neglected me lately. I have not seen you since yesterday. I am afraid you're faithless. Every one told me so.

LORD AUGUSTUS (*R.*) : Now really, Mrs. Erlynne, allow me to explain.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*R.C.*) : No, dear Lord Augustus, you can't explain anything. It is your chief charm.

LORD AUGUSTUS : Ah ! if you find charms in me, Mrs. Erlynne——

[*They converse together.* LORD WINDERMERE *moves uneasily about the room watching* MRS. ERLYNNE.

LORD DARLINGTON (*to* LADY WINDERMERE) : How pale you are !

LADY WINDERMERE : Cowards are always pale !

LORD DARLINGTON : You look faint. Come out on the terrace.

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes. (*To* PARKER.) Parker, send my cloak out.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*crossing to her*) : Lady Windermere, how beautifully your terrace is illuminated. Reminds me of Prince Doria's at Rome.

[LADY WINDERMERE *bows coldly, and goes off with* LORD DARLINGTON.

Oh, how do you do, Mr. Graham ? Isn't that your aunt, Lady Jedburgh ? I should so much like to know her.

CECIL GRAHAM (*after a moment's hesitation and embarrassment*) : Oh, certainly, if you wish it. Aunt Caroline, allow me to introduce Mrs. Erlynne.

MRS. ERLYNNE : So pleased to meet you, Lady Jedburgh. (*Sits beside her on the sofa.*) Your nephew and I are great friends. I am so much interested in his political career. I think he's sure to be a wonderful success. He thinks like a Tory, and talks like a Radical, and that's so important nowadays. He's such a brilliant talker, too. But we all know from whom he inherits that. Lord Allandale was saying to me only yesterday, in the Park, that Mr. Graham talks almost as well as his aunt.

LADY JEDBURGH (*R.*) : Most kind of you to say these charming things to me !

[MRS. ERLYNNE *smiles, and continues conversation.*

DUMBY (*to* CECIL GRAHAM) : Did you introduce Mrs. Erlynne to Lady Jedburgh ?

CECIL GRAHAM : Had to, my dear fellow. Couldn't help it ! That woman can make one do anything she wants. How, I don't know.

DUMBY : Hope to goodness she won't speak to me ! (*Saunters towards* LADY PLYMDALE.)

MRS. ERLYNNE (*C. To* LADY JEDBURGH) : On Thursday ? With great pleasure. (*Rises, and speaks to* LORD WINDERMERE, *laughing.*) What a bore it is to have to be civil to these old dowagers ! But they always insist on it !

LADY PLYMDALE (*to* MR. DUMBY) : Who is that well-dressed woman talking to Windermere ?

DUMBY : Haven't got the slightest idea ! Looks like an *édition de luxe* of a wicked French novel, meant specially for the English market.

MRS. ERLYNNE : So that is poor Dumby with Lady Plymdale ? I hear she is frightfully jealous of him. He doesn't seem anxious to speak to me to-night. I suppose he is afraid of her. Those straw-coloured women have dreadful tempers. Do you know, I think I'll dance with you first, Windermere. (LORD WINDERMERE *bites his lip and frowns.*) It will make Lord Augustus so jealous ! Lord Augustus ! (LORD AUGUSTUS *comes down.*) Lord Windermere insists on my dancing with him first, and, as it's his own house, I can't well refuse. You know I would much sooner dance with you.

LORD AUGUSTUS (*with a low bow*) : I wish I could think so, Mrs. Erlynne.

MRS. ERLYNNE : You know it far too well. I can fancy a person dancing through life with you and finding it charming.

LORD AUGUSTUS (*placing his hand on his white waistcoat*): Oh, thank you, thank you. You are the most adorable of all ladies !

MRS. ERLYNNE : What a nice speech ! So simple and so sincere ! Just the sort

of speech I like. Well, you shall hold my bouquet. (*Goes towards ballroom on* LORD WINDERMERE'S *arm.*) Ah, Mr. Dumby, how are you? I am so sorry I have been out the last three times you have called. Come and lunch on Friday.

DUMBY (*with perfect nonchalance*) : Delighted!

[LADY PLYMDALE *glares with indignation at* MR. DUMBY. LORD AUGUSTUS *follows* MRS. ERLYNNE *and* LORD WINDERMERE *into the ball-room holding bouquet.*

LADY PLYMDALE (*to* MR. DUMBY) : What an absolute brute you are! I never can believe a word you say! Why did you tell me you didn't know her? What do you mean by calling on her three times running? You are not to go to lunch there; of course you understand that?

DUMBY : My dear Laura, I wouldn't dream of going!

LADY PLYMDALE : You haven't told me her name yet! Who is she?

DUMBY (*coughs slightly and smooths his hair*) : She's a Mrs. Erlynne.

LADY PLYMDALE : That woman!

DUMBY : Yes; that is what every one calls her.

LADY PLYMDALE : How very interesting! How intensely interesting! I really must have a good stare at her. (*Goes to door of ball-room and looks in.*) I have heard the most shocking things about her. They say she is ruining poor Windermere. And Lady Windermere, who goes in for being so proper, invites her! How extremely amusing! It takes a thoroughly good woman to do a thoroughly stupid thing. You are to lunch there on Friday!

DUMBY : Why?

LADY PLYMDALE : Because I want you to take my husband with you. He has been so attentive lately, that he has become a perfect nuisance. Now, this woman is just the thing for him. He'll dance attendance upon her as long as she lets him, and won't bother me. I assure you, women of that kind are most useful. They form the basis of other people's marriages.

DUMBY : What a mystery you are!

LADY PLYMDALE (*looking at him*) : I wish *you* were!

DUMBY : I am—to myself. I am the only person in the world I should like to know thoroughly; but I don't see any chance of it just at present.

[*They pass into the ball-room, and* LADY WINDERMERE *and* LORD DARLINGTON *enter from the terrace.*

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes. Her coming here is monstrous, unbearable. I know now what you meant to-day at tea time. Why didn't you tell me right out: You should have!

LORD DARLINGTON : I couldn't! A man can't tell these things about another man! But if I had known he was going to make you ask her here to-night, I think I would have told you. That insult, at any rate, you would have been spared.

LADY WINDERMERE : I did not ask her. He insisted on her coming—against my entreaties—against my commands. Oh! the house is tainted for me! I feel that every woman here sneers at me as she dances by with my husband. What have I done to deserve this? I gave him all my life. He took it—used it—spoiled it! I am degraded in my own eyes; and I lack courage—I am a coward! [*Sits down on sofa.*

LORD DARLINGTON : If I know you at all, I know that you can't live with a man who treats you like this! What sort of life would you have with him? You would feel that he was lying to you every moment of the day. You would feel that the look in his eyes was false, his voice false, his touch false, his passion false. He would come to you when he was weary of others; you would have

to comfort him. He would come to you when he was devoted to others ; you would have to charm him. You would have to be to him the mask of his real life, the cloak to hide his secret.

LADY WINDERMERE : You are right—you are terribly right. But where am I to turn ? You said you would be my friend, Lord Darlington.—Tell me, what am I to do ? Be my friend now.

LORD DARLINGTON : Between men and women there is no friendship possible. There is passion, enmity, worship, love, but no friendship. I love you——

LADY WINDERMERE : No, no ! (*Rises.*)

LORD DARLINGTON : Yes, I love you ! You are more to me than anything in the whole world. What does your husband give you ? Nothing. Whatever is in him he gives to this wretched woman, whom he has thrust into your society, into your home, to shame you before every one. I offer you my life——

LADY WINDERMERE : Lord Darlington !

LORD DARLINGTON : My life—my whole life. Take it, and do with it what you will. . . . I love you—love you as I have never loved any living thing. From the moment I met you I loved you, loved you blindly, adoringly, madly ! You did not know it then—you know it now ! Leave this house to-night. I won't tell you that the world matters nothing, or the world's voice, or the voice of society. They matter a great deal. They matter far too much. But there are moments when one has to choose between living one's own life, fully, entirely completely—or dragging out some false, shallow, degrading existence that the world in its hypocrisy demands. You have that moment now. Choose ! Oh, my love, choose.

LADY WINDERMERE (*moving slowly away from him, and looking at him with startled eyes*) : I have not the courage.

LORD DARLINGTON (*following her*) : Yes ; you have the courage. There may be six months of pain, of disgrace even, but when you no longer bear his name, when you bear mine, all will be well. Margaret, my love, my wife that shall be some day—yes, my wife ! You know it ! What are you now ? This woman has the place that belongs by right to you. Oh ! go—go out of this house, with head erect, with a smile upon your lips, with courage in your eyes. All London will know why you did it ; and who will blame you ? No one. If they do, what matter ? Wrong ? What is wrong ? It's wrong for a man to abandon his wife for a shameless woman. It is wrong for a wife to remain with a man who so dishonours her. You said once you would make no compromise with things. Make none now. Be brave ! Be yourself !

LADY WINDERMERE : I am afraid of being myself. Let me think. Let me wait ! My husband may return to me. [*Sits down on sofa.*

LORD DARLINGTON : And you would take him back ! You are not what I thought you were. You are just the same as every other woman. You would stand anything rather than face the censure of a world, whose praise you would despise. In a week you will be driving with this woman in the Park. She will be your constant guest—your dearest friend. You would endure anything rather than break with one blow this monstrous tie. You are right. You have no courage ; none !

LADY WINDERMERE : Ah, give me time to think. I cannot answer you now. [*Passes her hand nervously over her brow.*

LORD DARLINGTON : It must be now or not at all.

LADY WINDERMERE (*rising from the sofa*) : Then, not at all ! [*A pause.*

LORD DARLINGTON : You break my heart !

LADY WINDERMERE : Mine is already broken. [*A pause.*

LORD DARLINGTON : To-morrow I leave England. This is the last time I shall ever look on you. You will never see me again. For one moment our lives

met—our souls touched. They must never meet or touch again. Good-bye, Margaret. [*Exit.*

LADY WINDERMERE : How alone I am in life ! How terribly alone !

[*The music stops. Enter the* DUCHESS OF BERWICK *and* LORD PAISLEY *laughing and talking. Other guests come in from ball-room.*

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Dear Margaret, I've just been having such a delightful chat with Mrs. Erlynne. I am so sorry for what I said to you this afternoon about her. Of course, she must be all right if *you* invite her. A most attractive woman, and has such sensible views on life. Told me she entirely disapproved of people marrying more than once, so I feel quite safe about poor Augustus. Can't imagine why people speak against her. It's those horrid nieces of mine —the Saville girls—they're always talking scandal. Still, I should go to Homberg, dear, I really should. She is just a little too attractive. But where is Agatha ? Oh, there she is : (LADY AGATHA *and* MR. HOPPER *enter from terrace L.U.E.*) Mr. Hopper, I am very, very angry with you. You have taken Agatha out on the terrace, and she is so delicate.

HOPPER (*L.C.*) : Awfully sorry, Duchess. We went out for a moment and then got chatting together.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*C.*) : Ah, about dear Australia, I suppose ?

HOPPER : Yes !

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Agatha, darling ! [*Beckons her over.*

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma !

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*aside*) : Did Mr. Hopper definitely——

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : And what answer did you give him, dear child ?

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*affectionately*) : My dear one ! You always say the right thing. Mr. Hopper ! James ! Agatha has told me everything. How cleverly you have both kept your secret.

HOPPER : You don't mind my taking Agatha off to Australia, then, Duchess ?

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*indignantly*) : To Australia ! Oh, don't mention that dreadful vulgar place.

HOPPER : But she said she'd like to come with me.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK (*severely*) : Did you say that, Agatha ?

LADY AGATHA : Yes, mamma.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : Agatha, you say the most silly things possible. I think on the whole that Grosvenor Square would be a more healthy place to reside in. There are lots of vulgar people live in Grosvenor Square, but at any rate there are no horrid kangaroos crawling about. But we'll talk about that to-morrow. James, you can take Agatha down. You'll come to lunch, of course, James. At half-past one, instead of two. The Duke will wish to say a few words to you, I am sure.

HOPPER : I should like to have a chat with the Duke, Duchess. He has not said a single word to me yet.

DUCHESS OF BERWICK : I think you'll find he will have a great deal to say to you to-morrow. (*Exit* LADY AGATHA *with* MR. HOPPER.) And now good-night, Margaret. I'm afraid it's the old, old story, dear. Love—well, not love at first sight, but love at the end of the season, which is so much more satisfactory.

LADY WINDERMERE : Good-night, Duchess.

[*Exit the* DUCHESS OF BERWICK *on* LORD PAISLEY'S *arm.*

LADY PLYMDALE : My dear Margaret, what a handsome woman your husband

has been dancing with ! I should be quite jealous if I were you ! is she a great friend of yours ?

LADY WINDERMERE : No !

LADY PLYMDALE : Really ? Good-night, dear. [*Looks at* MR. DUMBY *and exit.*

DUMBY : Awful manners young Hopper has !

CECIL GRAHAM : Ah ! Hopper is one of Nature's gentlemen, the worst type of gentleman I know.

DUMBY : Sensible woman, Lady Windermere. Lots of wives would have objected to Mrs. Erlynne coming. But Lady Windermere has that uncommon thing called common sense.

CECIL GRAHAM : And Windermere knows that nothing looks so like innocence as an indiscretion.

DUMBY : Yes ; dear Windermere is becoming almost modern. Never thought he would. [*Bows to* LADY WINDERMERE *and exit.*

LADY JEDBURGH : Good night, Lady Windermere. What a fascinating woman Mrs. Erlynne is ! She is coming to lunch on Thursday, won't you come too ? I expect the Bishop and dear Lady Merton.

LADY WINDERMERE : I am afraid I am engaged, Lady Jedburgh.

LADY JEDBURGH : So sorry. Come, dear. [*Exeunt* LADY JEDBURGH *and* MISS GRAHAM.

Enter MRS. ERLYNNE *and* LORD WINDERMERE.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Charming ball it has been ! Quite reminds me of old days. (*Sits on sofa.*) And I see that there are just as many fools in society as there used to be. So pleased to find that nothing has altered ! Except Margaret. She's grown quite pretty. The last time I saw her—twenty-years ago, she was a fright in flannel. Positive fright, I assure you. The dear Duchess ! and that sweet Lady Agatha ! Just the type of girl I like ! Well, really, Windermere, if I am to be the Duchess's sister-in-law——

LORD WINDERMERE (*sitting L. of her.*) : But are you—— ?

[*Exit* MR. CECIL GRAHAM *with rest of guests.* LADY WINDERMERE *watches, with a look of scorn and pain,* MRS. ERLYNNE *and her husband. They are unconscious of her presence.*

MRS. ERLYNNE : Oh, yes ! He's to call to-morrow at twelve o'clock ! He wanted to propose to-night. In fact he did. He kept on proposing. Poor Augustus, you know how he repeats himself. Such a bad habit ! But I told him I wouldn't give him an answer till to-morrow. Of course I am going to take him. And I dare say I'll make him an admirable wife, as wives go. And there is a great deal of good in Lord Augustus. Fortunately it is all on the surface. Just where good qualities should be. Of course you must help me in this matter.

LORD WINDERMERE : I am not called on to encourage Lord Augustus, I suppose ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : Oh, no ! I do the encouraging. But you will make me a handsome settlement, Windermere, won't you ?

LORD WINDERMERE (*frowning*) : Is that what you want to talk to me about to-night ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : Yes.

LORD WINDERMERE (*with a gesture of impatience*) : I will not talk of it here.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*laughing*) : Then we will talk of it on the terrace. Even business should have a picturesque background. Should it not, Windermere ? with a proper background women can do anything.

LORD WINDERMERE : Won't to-morrow do as well ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : No ; you see, to-morrow I am going to accept him. And I think it would be a good thing if I was able to tell him that I had—well, what

shall I say?—£2000 a year left to me by a third cousin—or a second husband—or some distant relative of that kind. It would be an additional attraction, wouldn't it? You have a delightful opportunity now of paying me a compliment, Windermere. But you are not very clever at paying compliments. I am afraid Margaret doesn't encourage you in that excellent habit. It's a great mistake on her part. When men give up saying what is charming, they give up thinking what is charming. But seriously, what do you say to £2000? £2500, I think. In modern life margin is everything, Windermere, don't you think the world an intensely amusing place? I do!

[*Exit on terrace with* LORD WINDERMERE. *Music strikes up in ball-room.*

LADY WINDERMERE: To stay in this house any longer is impossible To-night a man who loves me offered me his whole life. I refused it. It was foolish of me. I will offer him mine now. I will give him mine. I will go to him! (*Puts on cloak and goes to the door, then turns back. Sits down at table and writes a letter, puts it into an envelope, and leaves it on table.*) Arthur has never understood me. When he reads this, he will. He may do as he chooses now with his life. I have done with mine as I think best, as I think right. It is he who has broken the bond of marriage—not I. I only break its bondage. [*Exit.*

PARKER *enters L. and crosses towards the ball-room R. Enter* MRS. ERLYNNE.

MRS. ERLYNNE: Is Lady Windermere in the ball-room?

PARKER: Her ladyship has just gone out.

MRS. ERLYNNE: Gone out? She's not on the terrace?

PARKER: No, madam. Her ladyship has just gone out of the house.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*starts, and looks at the servant with a puzzled expression in her face*): Out of the house?

PARKER: Yes, madam—her ladyship told me she had left a letter for his lordship on the table.

MRS. ERLYNNE: A letter for Lord Windermere?

PARKER: Yes madam!

MRS. ERLYNNE: Thank you.

[*Exit* PARKER. *The music in the ball-room stops.*

Gone out of her house! A letter addressed to her husband! (*Goes over to bureau and looks at letter. Takes it up and lays it down again with a shudder of fear.*) No, no! It would be impossible! Life doesn't repeat its tragedies like that! Oh, why does this horrible fancy come across me? Why do I remember now the one moment of my life I most wish to forget? Does life repeat its tragedies? (*Tears letter open and reads it, then sinks down into a chair with a gesture of anguish.*) Oh, how terrible! The same words that twenty years ago I wrote to her father! and how bitterly I have been punished for it! No; my punishment, my real punishment is to-night, is now! [*Still seated R.*

Enter LORD WINDERMERE *L.U.E.*

LORD WINDERMERE: Have you said good-night to my wife? [*Comes C.*

MRS. ERLYNNE (*crushing letter in her hand*): Yes.

LORD WINDERMERE: Where is she?

MRS. ERLYNNE: She is very tired. She has gone to bed. She said she had a headache.

LORD WINDERMERE: I must go to her. You'll excuse me?

MRS. ERLYNNE (*rising hurriedly*): Oh, no! It's nothing serious. She's only very tired, that is all. Besides, there are people still in the supper-room. She wants you to make her apologies to them. She said she didn't wish to be disturbed. (*Drops letter.*) She asked me to tell you!

LORD WINDERMERE (*picks up letter*): You have dropped something.

MRS. ERLYNNE: Oh yes, thank you, that is mine. [*Puts out her hand to take it.*

LORD WINDERMERE (*still looking at letter*) : But it's my wife's handwriting, isn't it ?

MRS. ERLYNNE (*takes the letter quickly*) : Yes, it's—an address. Will you ask them to call my carriage, please ?

LORD WINDERMERE : Certainly. [*Goes L. and Exit.*

MRS. ERLYNNE : Thanks ! What can I do ? What can I do ? I feel a passion awakening within me that I never felt before. What can it mean ? The daughter must not be like the mother—that would be terrible. How can I save her ? How can I save my child ? A moment may ruin a life. Who knows that better than I ? Windermere must be got out of the house ; that is absolutely necessary. (*Goes L.*) But how shall I do it ? It must be done somehow. Ah !

Enter LORD AUGUSTUS *R.U.E. carrying bouquet.*

LORD AUGUSTUS : Dear lady, I am in such suspense ! May I not have an answer to my request ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : Lord Augustus, listen to me. You are to take Lord Windermere down to your club at once, and keep him there as long as possible. You understand ?

LORD AUGUSTUS : But you said you wished me to keep early hours !

MRS. ERLYNNE (*nervously*) : Do what I tell you. Do what I tell you.

LORD AUGUSTUS : And my reward ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : Your reward ? Your reward ? Oh ! ask me that to-morrow. But don't let Windermere out of your sight to-night. If you do I will never forgive you. I will never speak to you again. I'll have nothing to do with you. Remember you are to keep Windermere at your club, and don't let him come back to-night. [*Exit L.*

LORD AUGUSTUS : Well, really, I might be her husband already. Positively I might. [*Follows her in a bewildered manner.*

ACT III

LORD DARLINGTON'S *Rooms. A large sofa in front of fireplace R. At the back of the stage a curtain is drawn across the window. Doors L. and R. Table R. with writing materials. Table C. with syphons, glasses, and Tantalus frame. Table L. with cigar and cigarette box. Lamps lit.*

LADY WINDERMERE (*standing by the fireplace*) : Why doesn't he come ? This waiting is horrible. He should be here. Why is he not here, to wake by passionate words some fire within me ? I am cold—cold as a loveless thing. Arthur must have read my letter by this time. If he cared for me, he would have come after me, would have taken me back by force. But he doesn't care. He's entrammelled by this woman—fascinated by her—dominated by her. If a woman wants to hold a man, she has merely to appeal to what is worst in him. We make gods of men and they leave us. Others make brutes of them and they fawn and are faithful. How hideous life is ! . . . Oh ! it was mad of me to come here, horribly mad. And yet, which is the worst, I wonder, to be at the mercy of a man who loves one, or the wife of a man who in one's own house dishonours one ? What woman knows ? What woman in the whole world ? But will he love me always, this man to whom I am giving my life ? What do I bring him ? Lips that have lost the note of joy, eyes that are blinded by tears, chill hands and icy heart. I bring him nothing. I must go back—no ; I can't go back, my letter has put me in their power—Arthur would not take me back ! That fatal letter ! No ! Lord Darlington leaves England to-morrow. I will go with him—I have no choice. (*Sits down for a few moments. Then starts up and puts on her cloak.*) No, no ! I will go back, let Arthur do with me what

he pleases. I can't wait here. It has been madness my coming. I must go at once. As for Lord Darlington—Oh ! here he is ! What shall I do ? What can I say to him ? Will he let me go away at all ? I have heard that men are brutal, horrible . . . Oh ! [*Hides her face in her hands.*

Enter MRS. ERLYNNE *L.*

MRS. ERLYNNE : Lady Windermere ! (LADY WINDERMERE *starts and looks up. Then recoils in contempt.*) Thank Heaven I am in time. You must go back to your husband's house immediately.

LADY WINDERMERE : Must ?

MRS. ERLYNNE (*authoritatively*) : Yes, you must ! There is not a second to be lost. Lord Darlington may return at any moment.

LADY WINDERMERE : Don't come near me !

MRS. ERLYNNE : Oh ! You are on the brink of ruin, you are on the brink of a hideous precipice. You must leave this place at once, my carriage is waiting at the corner of the street. You must come with me and drive straight home. [LADY WINDERMERE *throws off her cloak and flings it on the sofa.* What are you doing ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Mrs. Erlynne—if you had not come here, I would have gone back. But now that I see you, I feel that nothing in the whole world would induce me to live under the same roof as Lord Windermere. You fill me with horror. There is something about you that stirs the wildest—rage within me. And I know why you are here. My husband sent you to lure me back that I might serve as a blind to whatever relations exist between you and him.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Oh ! You don't think that—you can't.

LADY WINDERMERE : Go back to my husband, Mrs. Erlynne. He belongs to you and not to me. I suppose he is afraid of a scandal. Men are such cowards. They outrage every law of the world, and are afraid of the world's tongue. But he had better prepare himself. He shall have a scandal. He shall have the worst scandal there has been in London for years. He shall see his name in every vile paper, mine on every hideous placard.

MRS. ERLYNNE : No—no——

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes ! he shall. Had he come himself, I admit I would have gone back to the life of degradation you and he had prepared for me—I was going back—but to stay himself at home, and to send you as his messenger—oh ! it was infamous—infamous.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*C.*) : Lady Windermere, you wrong me horribly—you wrong your husband horribly. He doesn't know you are here—he thinks you are safe in your own house. He thinks you are asleep in your own room. He never read the mad letter you wrote to him !

LADY WINDERMERE (*R.*) : Never read it !

MRS. ERLYNNE : No—he knows nothing about it.

LADY WINDERMERE : How simple you think me ! (*Going to her.*) You are lying to me !

MRS. ERLYNNE (*restraining herself*) : I am not. I am telling you the truth.

LADY WINDERMERE : If my husband didn't read my letter, how is it that you are here ? Who told you I had left the house you were shameless enough to enter ? Who told you where I had gone to ? My husband told you, and sent you to decoy me back (*crosses L.*).

MRS. ERLYNNE (*R.C.*) : Your husband has never seen the letter. I—saw it, I opened it. I—read it.

LADY WINDERMERE (*turning to her*) : You opened a letter of mine to my husband ? You wouldn't dare !

MRS. ERLYNNE : Dare ! Oh ! to save you from the abyss into which you are falling, there is nothing in the world I would not dare, nothing in the whole world. Here is the letter. Your husband has never read it. He never shall read it. (*Going to fireplace.*) It should never have been written.

[*Tears it and throws it into the fire.*

LADY WINDERMERE (*with infinite contempt in her voice and look*) : How do I know that that was my letter after all ? You seem to think the commonest device can take me in !

MRS. ERLYNNE : Oh ! why do you disbelieve everything I tell you ? What object do you think I have in coming here, except to save you from utter ruin, to save you from the consequence of a hideous mistake ? That letter that is burnt now *was* your letter. I swear it to you !

LADY WINDERMERE (*slowly*) : You took good care to burn it before I had examined it. I cannot trust you. You, whose whole life is a lie, how could you speak the truth about anything ? [*Sits down.*

MRS. ERLYNNE (*hurriedly*) : Think as you like about me—say what you choose against me, but go back, go back to the husband you love.

LADY WINDERMERE (*sullenly*) : I do *not* love him !

MRS. ERLYNNE : You do, and you know that he loves you.

LADY WINDERMERE : He does not understand what love is. He understands it as little as you do—but I see what you want. It would be a great advantage for you to get me back. Dear Heaven ! what a life I would have then ! Living at the mercy of a woman who has neither mercy nor pity in her, a woman whom it is an infamy to meet, a degradation to know, a vile woman, a woman who comes between husband and wife !

MRS. ERLYNNE (*with a gesture of despair*) : Lady Windermere, Lady Windermere, don't say such terrible things. You don't know how terrible they are, how terrible and how unjust. Listen, you must listen ! Only go back to your husband, and I promise you never to communicate with him again on any pretext—never to see him—never to have anything to do with his life or yours. The money that he gave me, he gave me not through love, but through hatred, not in worship, but in contempt. The hold I have over him——

LADY WINDERMERE (*rising*) : Ah ! you admit you have a hold !

MRS. EPLYNNE : Yes, and I will tell you what it is. It is his love for you, Lady Windermere.

LADY WINDERMERE : You expect me to believe that ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : You must believe it ! It is true. It is his love for you that has made him submit to—oh ! call it what you like, tyranny, threats, anything you choose. But it is his love for you. His desire to spare you—shame, yes, shame and disgrace.

LADY WINDERMERE : What do you mean ? You are insolent ! What have I to do with you ?

MRS. ERLYNNE (*humbly*) : Nothing. I know it—but I tell you that your husband loves you—that you may never meet with such love again in your whole life—that such love you will never meet—and that if you throw it away, the day may come when you will starve for love and it will not be given to you, beg for love and it will be denied you—Oh ! Arthur loves you !

LADY WINDERMERE : Arthur ? And you tell me there is nothing between you ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : Lady Windermere, before Heaven your husband is guiltless of all offence towards you ! And I—I tell you that had it ever occurred to me that such a monstrous suspicion would have entered your mind, I would have died rather than have crossed your life or his—oh ! died, gladly died !

[*Moves away to sofa R.*

LADY WINDERMERE : You talk as if you had a heart. Women like you have no hearts. Heart is not in you. You are bought and sold. [*Sits L.C.*

MRS. ERLYNNE (*starts, with a gesture of pain. Then restrains herself, and comes over to where* LADY WINDERMERE *is sitting. As she speaks, she stretches out her hands towards her, but does not dare to touch her*) : Believe what you choose about me. I am not worth a moment's sorrow. But don't spoil your beautiful young life on my account ! You don't know what may be in store for you, unless you leave this house at once. You don't know what it is to fall into the pit, to be despised, mocked, abandoned, sneered at—to be an outcast ! to find the door shut against one, to have to creep in by hideous byways, afraid every moment lest the mask should be stripped from one's face, and all the while to hear the laughter, the horrible laughter of the world, a thing more tragic than all the tears the world has ever shed. You don't know what it is. One pays for one's sin, and then one pays again, and all one's life one pays. You must never know that.—As for me, if suffering be an expiation, then at this moment I have expiated all my faults, whatever they have been ; for to-night you have made a heart in one who had it not, made it and broken it.—But let that pass. I may have wrecked my own life, but I will not let you wreck yours. You—why, you are a mere girl, you would be lost. You haven't got the kind of brains that enables a woman to get back. You have neither the wit nor the courage. You couldn't stand dishonour ! No ! Go back, Lady Windermere, to the husband who loves you, whom you love. You have a child, Lady Windermere. Go back to that child who even now, in pain or in joy, may be calling to you. (LADY WINDERMERE *rises.*) God gave you that child. He will require from you that you make his life fine, that you watch over him. What answer will you make to God if his life is ruined through you ? Back to your house, Lady Windermere—your husband loves you ! He has never swerved for a moment from the love he bears you. But even if he had a thousand loves, you must stay with your child. If he was harsh to you, you must stay with your child. If he ill-treated you, you must stay with your child. If he abandoned you, your place is with your child.

[LADY WINDERMERE *bursts into tears and buries her face in her hands.*

(*Rushing to her.*) Lady Windermere !

LADY WINDERMERE (*holding out her hands to her, helplessly, as a child might do*) : Take me home. Take me home.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*is about to embrace her. Then restrains herself. There is a look of wonderful joy in her face*) : Come ! Where is your cloak ? (*Getting it from sofa.*) Here. Put it on. Come at once ! [*They go to the door.*

LADY WINDERMERE : Stop ! Don't you hear voices ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : No, no ! There is no one !

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes, there is ! Listen ! Oh ! that is my husband's voice ! He is coming in ! Save me ! Oh, it's some plot ! You have sent for him.

[*Voices outside.*

MRS. ERLYNNE : Silence ! I'm here to save you, if I can. But I fear it is too late ! There ! (*Points to the curtain across the window.*) The first chance you have, slip out, if you ever get a chance !

LADY WINDERMERE : But you ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : Oh ! never mind me. I'll face them.

[LADY WINDERMERE *hides herself behind the curtain.*

LORD AUGUSTUS (*outside*) : Nonsense, dear Windermere, you must not leave me !

MRS. ERLYNNE : Lord Augustus ! Then it is I who am lost ! (*Hesitates for a moment, then looks round and sees door R., and exit through it*).

Enter LORD DARLINGTON, MR. DUMBY, LORD WINDERMERE, LORD AUGUSTUS LORTON, *and* MR. CECIL GRAHAM.

DUMBY : What a nuisance their turning us out of the club at this hour ! It's only two o'clock. (*Sinks into a chair.*) The lively part of the evening is only just beginning. (*Yawns and closes his eyes.*)

LORD WINDERMERE : It is very good of you, Lord Darlington, allowing Augustus to force our company on you, but I'm afraid I can't stay long.

LORD DARLINGTON : Really ! I am so sorry ! You'll take a cigar, won't you ?

LORD WINDERMERE : Thanks ! (*Sits down.*)

LORD AUGUSTUS (*to* LORD WINDERMERE) : My dear boy, you must not dream of going. I have a great deal to talk to you about, of demmed importance, too. (*Sits down with him at L. table.*)

CECIL GRAHAM : Oh ! We all know what that is ! Tuppy can't talk about anything but Mrs. Erlynne.

LORD WINDERMERE : Well, that is no business of yours, is it, Cecil ?

CECIL GRAHAM : None ! That is why it interests me. My own business always bores me to death. I prefer other people's.

LORD DARLINGTON : Have something to drink, you fellows. Cecil, you'll have a whisky and soda ?

CECIL GRAHAM : Thanks. (*Goes to table with* LORD DARLINGTON.) Mrs. Erlynne looked very handsome to-night, didn't she ?

LORD DARLINGTON : I am not one of her admirers.

CECIL GRAHAM : I usen't to be, but I am now. Why ! she actually made me introduce her to poor dear Aunt Caroline. I believe she is going to lunch there.

LORD DARLINGTON (*in surprise*) : No ?

CECIL GRAHAM : She is, really.

LORD DARLINGTON : Excuse me, you fellows. I'm going away to-morrow. And I have to write a few letters. (*Goes to writing table and sits down.*)

DUMBY : Clever woman, Mrs. Erlynne.

CECIL GRAHAM : Hallo, Dumby ! I thought you were asleep.

DUMBY : I am, I usually am !

LORD AUGUSTUS : A very clever woman. Knows perfectly well what a demmed fool I am—knows it as well as I do myself.

[CECIL GRAHAM *comes towards him laughing.*

Ah, you may laugh, my boy, but it is a great thing to come across a woman who thoroughly understands one.

DUMBY : It is an awfully dangerous thing. They always end by marrying one.

CECIL GRAHAM : But I thought, Tuppy, you were never going to see her again ! Yes ! you told me so yesterday evening at the club. You said you'd heard—— (*Whispering to him.*)

LORD AUGUSTUS : Oh, she's explained that.

CECIL GRAHAM : And the Wiesbaden affair ?

LORD AUGUSTUS : She's explained that too.

DUMBY : And her income, Tuppy ? Has she explained that ?

LORD AUGUSTUS (*in a very serious voice*) : She's going to explain that to-morrow.

CECIL GRAHAM *goes back to C. table.*

DUMBY : Awfully commercial, women nowadays. Our grandmothers threw their caps over the mills, of course, but, by Jove, their granddaughters only throw their caps over mills that can raise the wind for them.

LORD AUGUSTUS : You want to make her out a wicked woman. She is not !

CECIL GRAHAM : Oh ! Wicked women bother one. Good women bore one. That is the only difference between them.

LORD AUGUSTUS (*puffing a cigar*) : Mrs. Erlynne has a future before her.

DUMBY : Mrs. Erlynne has a past before her.

LORD AUGUSTUS : I prefer women with a past. They're always so demmed amusing to talk to.

CECIL GRAHAM : Well, you'll have lots of topics of conversation with *her*, Tuppy. (*Rising and going to him.*)

LORD AUGUSTUS : You're getting annoying, dear boy ; you're getting demmed annoying.

CECIL GRAHAM (*puts his hands on his shoulders*) : Now, Tuppy, you've lost your figure and you've lost your character. Don't lose your temper ; you have only got one.

LORD AUGUSTUS : My dear boy, if I wasn't the most good-natured man in London——

CECIL GRAHAM : We'd treat you with more respect, wouldn't we, Tuppy ? (*Strolls away.*)

DUMBY : The youth of the present day are quite monstrous. They have absolutely no respect for dyed hair. (LORD AUGUSTUS *looks round angrily.*)

CECIL GRAHAM : Mrs. Erlynne has a very great respect for dear Tuppy.

DUMBY : Then Mrs. Erlynne sets an admirable example to the rest of her sex. It is perfectly brutal the way most women nowadays behave to men who are not their husbands.

LORD WINDERMERE : Dumby, you are ridiculous, and Cecil, you let your tongue run away with you. You must leave Mrs. Erlynne alone. You don't really know anything about her, and you're always talking scandal against her.

CECIL GRAHAM (*coming towards him L.C.*) : My dear Arthur, I never talk scandal. *I* only talk gossip.

LORD WINDERMERE : What is the difference between scandal and gossip ?

CECIL GRAHAM : Oh ! gossip is charming ! History is merely gossip. But scandal is gossip made tedious by morality. Now, I never moralise. A man who moralises is usually a hypocrite, and a woman who moralises is invariably plain. There is nothing in the whole world so unbecoming to a woman as a Noncomformist conscience. And most women know it, I'm glad to say.

LORD AUGUSTUS : Just my sentiments, dear boy, just my sentiments.

CECIL GRAHAM : Sorry to hear it, Tuppy ; whenever people agree with me, I always feel I must be wrong.

LORD AUGUSTUS : My dear boy, when I was your age——

CECIL GRAHAM : But you never were, Tuppy, and you never will be. (*Goes up C.*) I say, Darlington, let us have some cards. You'll play, Arthur, won't you ?

LORD WINDERMERE : No, thanks, Cecil.

DUMBY (*with a sigh*) : Good heavens ! how marriage ruins a man ! It's as demoralising as cigarettes, and far more expensive.

CECIL GRAHAM : You'll play, of course, Tuppy ?

LORD AUGUSTUS (*pouring himself out a brandy and soda at table*) : Can't, dear boy. Promised Mrs. Erlynne never to play or drink again.

CECIL GRAHAM : Now, my dear Tuppy, don't be led astray into the paths of virtue. Reformed, you would be perfectly tedious. That is the worst of women. They always want one to be good. And if we are good, when they meet us, they don't love us at all. They like to find us quite irretrievably bad, and to leave us quite unattractively good.

LORD DARLINGTON (*rising from R. table, where he has been writing letters.*) : They always do find us bad !

DUMBY : I don't think we are bad. I think we are all good, except Tuppy.

LORD DARLINGTON : No, we are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars. (*Sits down at C. table.*)

DUMBY : We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars ? Upon my word, you are very romantic to-night, Darlington.

CECIL GRAHAM : Too romantic ! You must be in love. Who is the girl ?

LORD DARLINGTON : The woman I love is not free, or thinks she isn't. (*Glances instinctively at* LORD WINDERMERE *while he speaks.*)

CECIL GRAHAM : A married woman, then ! Well, there's nothing in the world like the devotion of a married woman. It's a thing no married man knows anything about.

LORD DARLINGTON : Oh ! she doesn't love me. She is a good woman. She is the only good woman I have ever met in my life.

CECIL GRAHAM : The only good woman you have ever met in your life ?

LORD DARLINGTON : Yes !

CECIL GRAHAM (*lighting a cigarette*) : Well, you are a lucky fellow ! Why, I have met hundreds of good women. I never seem to meet any but good women. The world is perfectly packed with good women. To know them is a middle-class education.

LORD DARLINGTON : This woman has purity and innocence. She has everything we men have lost.

CECIL GRAHAM : My dear fellow, what on earth should we men do going about with purity and innocence ? A carefully thought-out buttonhole is much more effective.

DUMBY : She doesn't really love you then?

LORD DARLINGTON : No, she does not !

DUMBY : I congratulate you, my dear fellow. In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it. The last is much the worst ; the last is a real tragedy ! But I am interested to hear she does not love you. How long could you love a woman who didn't love you, Cecil ?

CECIL GRAHAM : A woman who didn't love me ? Oh, all my life !

DUMBY : So could I. But it's so difficult to meet one.

LORD DARLINGTON : How can you be so conceited, Dumby ?

DUMBY : I didn't say it as a matter of conceit. I said it as a matter of regret. I have been wildly, madly adored. I am sorry I have. It has been an immense nuisance. I should like to be allowed a little time to myself now and then.

LORD AUGUSTUS (*looking round*) : Time to educate yourself, I suppose.

DUMBY : No, time to forget all I have learned. That is much more important, dear Tuppy. [LORD AUGUSTUS *moves uneasily in his chair.*

LORD DARLINGTON : What cynics you fellows are !

CECIL GRAHAM : What is a cynic ? [*Sitting on the back of the sofa.*

LORD DARLINGTON : A man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.

CECIL GRAHAM : And a sentimentalist, my dear Darlington, is a man who sees an absurd value in everything, and doesn't know the market price of any single thing.

LORD DARLINGTON : You always amuse me, Cecil. You talk as if you were a man of experience.

CECIL GRAHAM : I am. [*Moves up to front of fireplace.*

LORD DARLINGTON : You are far too young !

CECIL GRAHAM : That is a great error. Experience is a question of instinct about life. I have got it. Tuppy hasn't. Experience is the name Tuppy gives to his mistakes. That is all. (LORD AUGUSTUS *looks round indignantly.*)

DUMBY : Experience is the name every one gives to their mistakes.

CECIL GRAHAM (*standing with his back to the fireplace*) : One shouldn't commit any. (*Sees* LADY WINDERMERE'S *fan on sofa.*)

DUMBY : Life would be very dull without them.

CECIL GRAHAM : Of course you are quite faithful to this woman you are in love with, Darlington, to this good woman ?

LORD DARLINGTON : Cecil, if one really loves a woman, all other women in the world become absolutely meaningless to one. Love changes one—*I* am changed.

CECIL GRAHAM : Dear me ! How very interesting ! Tuppy, I want to talk to you. (LORD AUGUSTUS *takes no notice.*)

DUMBY : It's no use talking to Tuppy. You might just as well talk to a brick wall.

CECIL GRAHAM : But I like talking to a brick wall—it's the only thing in the world that never contradicts me ! Tuppy !

LORD AUGUSTUS : Well, what is it ? What is it ? (*Rising and going over to* CECIL GRAHAM.)

CECIL GRAHAM : Come over here. I want you particularly. (*Aside.*) Darlington has been moralising and talking about the purity of love, and that sort of thing, and he has got some woman in his rooms all the time.

LORD AUGUSTUS : No, really ! really !

CECIL GRAHAM (*in a low voice.*) : Yes, here is her fan. [*Points to the fan.*

LORD AUGUSTUS (*chuckling*) : By Jove ! By Jove !

LORD WINDERMERE (*up by door*) : I am really off now, Lord Darlington. I am sorry you are leaving England so soon. Pray call on us when you come back ! My wife and I will be charmed to see you !

LORD DARLINGTON (*up stage with* LORD WINDERMERE) : I am afraid I shall be away for many years. Good-night !

CECIL GRAHAM : Arthur !

LORD WINDERMERE : What ?

CECIL GRAHAM : I want to speak to you for a moment. No, do come !

LORD WINDERMERE (*putting on his coat*) : I can't—I'm off !

CECIL GRAHAM : It is something very particular. It will interest you enormously.

LORD WINDERMERE (*smiling*) : It is some of your nonsense, Cecil.

CECIL GRAHAM : It isn't ! It isn't really.

LORD AUGUSTUS (*going to him*) : My dear fellow, you mustn't go yet. I have a lot to talk to you about. And Cecil has something to show you.

LORD WINDERMERE (*walking over*) : Well, what is it ?

CECIL GRAHAM : Darlington has got a woman here in his rooms. Here is her fan. Amusing, isn't it ? (*A pause*).

LORD WINDERMERE : Good God ! [*Seizes the fan*—DUMBY *rises.*

CECIL GRAHAM : What is the matter ?

LORD WINDERMERE : Lord Darlington !

LORD DARLINGTON (*turning round*) : Yes !

LORD WINDERMERE : What is my wife's fan doing here in your rooms ? Hands off, Cecil. Don't touch me.

LORD DARLINGTON : Your wife's fan ?

LORD WINDERMERE : Yes, here it is !

LORD DARLINGTON (*walking towards him*) : I don't know !

LORD WINDERMERE : You must know. I demand an explanation. Don't hold me, you fool. (*To* CECIL GRAHAM.)

LORD DARLINGTON (*aside*) : She is here after all !

LORD WINDERMERE : Speak, sir ! Why is my wife's fan here ? Answer me ! By God ! I'll search your rooms, and if my wife's here, I'll—— (*Moves.*)

LORD DARLINGTON : You shall not search my rooms. You have no right to do so. I forbid you !

LORD WINDERMERE : You scoundrel ! I'll not leave your room till I have searched every corner of it ! What moves behind that curtain ? (*Rushes towards the curtain C.*)

MRS. ERLYNNE (*enters behind R.*) : Lord Windermere !

LORD WINDERMERE : Mrs. Erlynne !

[*Everyone starts and turns round.* LADY WINDERMERE *slips out from behind the curtain and glides from the room L.*

MRS. ERLYNNE : I am afraid I took your wife's fan in mistake for my own, when I was leaving your house to-night. I am so sorry. (*Takes fan from him.* LORD WINDERMERE looks at her in contempt. LORD DARLINGTON *in mingled astonishment and anger.* LORD AUGUSTUS *turns away. The other men smile at each other.*)

ACT IV

SCENE—*Same as in Act I.*

LADY WINDERMERE (*lying on sofa*) : How can I tell him ? I can't tell him. It would kill me. I wonder what happened after I escaped from that horrible room. Perhaps she told them the true reason of her being there, and the real meaning of that—fatal fan of mine. Oh, if he knows—how can I look him in the face again ? He would never forgive me. (*Touches bell.*) How securely one thinks one lives—out of reach of temptation, sin, folly. And then suddenly —Oh ! Life is terrible. It rules us, we do not rule it.

Enter ROSALIE *R.*

ROSALIE : Did your ladyship ring for me ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes. Have you found out at what time Lord Windermere came in last night ?

ROSALIE : His lordship did not come in till five o'clock.

LADY WINDERMERE : Five o'clock ? He knocked at my door this morning, didn't he ?

ROSALIE : Yes, my lady—at half-past nine. I told him your ladyship was not awake yet.

LADY WINDERMERE : Did he say anything ?

ROSALIE : Something about your ladyship's fan. I didn't quite catch what his lordship said. Has the fan been lost, my lady ? I can't find it, and Parker says it was not left in any of the rooms. He has looked in all of them and on the terrace as well.

LADY WINDERMERE : It doesn't matter. Tell Parker not to trouble. That will do. [*Exit* ROSALIE.

LADY WINDERMERE (*rising*) : She is sure to tell him. I can fancy a person doing a wonderful act of self-sacrifice, doing it spontaneously, recklessly, nobly—and afterwards finding out that it costs too much. Why should she hesitate between her ruin and mine ? . . . How strange ! I would have publicly disgraced her in my own house. She accepts public disgrace in the house of another to save me. . . . There is a bitter irony in things, a bitter irony in the way we talk of good and bad women. . . . Oh, what a lesson ! and what a pity that in life we only get our lessons when they are of no use to us. For even if she doesn't tell, I must. Oh ! the shame of it, the shame of it. To tell it is to live through it all again. Actions are the first tragedy in life, words are the second. Words are perhaps the worst. Words are merciless. . . . Oh ! (*Starts as* LORD WINDERMERE *enters.*)

LORD WINDERMERE (*kisses her*) : Margaret—how pale you look !

LADY WINDERMERE : I slept very badly.

LORD WINDERMERE (*sitting on sofa with her*) : I am so sorry. I came in dreadfully late, and didn't like to wake you. You are crying, dear.

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes, I am crying, for I have something to tell you, Arthur.

LORD WINDERMERE : My dear child, you are not well. You've been doing too much. Let us go away to the country. You'll be all right at Selby. The season is almost over. There is no use staying on. Poor darling ! We'll go away to-day, if you like. (*Rises.*) We can easily catch the 3.40. I'll send a wire to Fannen. (*Crosses and sits down at table to write a telegram.*)

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes, let us go away to-day. No ; I can't go to-day, Arthur. There is some one I must see before I leave town—some one who has been kind to me.

LORD WINDERMERE (*rising and leaning over sofa*) : Kind to you ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Far more than that. (*Rises and goes to him.*) I will tell you, Arthur, but only love me, love me as you used to love me.

LORD WINDERMERE : Used to ? You are not thinking of that wretched woman who came here last night ? (*Coming round and sitting R. of her.*) You don't still imagine—no, you couldn't.

LADY WINDERMERE : I don't. I know now I was wrong and foolish.

LORD WINDERMERE : It was very good of you to receive her last night—but you are never to see her again.

LADY WINDERMERE : Why do you say that ? (*A pause.*)

LORD WINDERMERE (*holding her hand*) : Margaret, I thought Mrs. Erlynne was a woman more sinned against than sinning, as the phrase goes. I thought she wanted to be good, to get back into a place that she had lost by a moment's folly, to lead again a decent life. I believed what she told me—I was mistaken in her. She is bad—as bad as a woman can be.

LADY WINDERMERE : Arthur, Arthur, don't talk so bitterly about any woman. I don't think now that people can be divided into the good and the bad as though they were two separate races or creations. What are called good women may have terrible things in them, mad moods of recklessness, assertion, jealousy, sin. Bad women, as they are termed, may have in them sorrow, repentance, pity, sacrifice. And I don't think Mrs. Erlynne a bad woman—I know she's not.

LORD WINDERMERE : My dear child, the woman's impossible. No matter what harm she tries to do us, you must never see her again. She is inadmissible anywhere.

LADY WINDERMERE : But I want to see her. I want her to come here.

LORD WINDERMERE : Never !

LADY WINDERMERE : She came here once as *your* guest. She must come now as *mine*. That is but fair.

LORD WINDERMERE : She should never have come here.

LADY WINDERMERE (*rising*) : It is too late, Arthur, to say that now. (*Moves away.*)

LORD WINDERMERE (*rising*) : Margaret, if you knew where Mrs. Erlynne went last night, after she left this house, you would not sit in the same room with her. It was absolutely shameless, the whole thing.

LADY WINDERMERE : Arthur, I can't bear it any longer. I must tell you. Last night——

Enter PARKER *with a tray on which lie* LADY WINDERMERE'S *fan and a card.*

PARKER : Mrs. Erlynne has called to return your ladyship's fan which she took away by mistake last night. Mrs. Erlynne has written a message on the card.

LADY WINDERMERE : Oh, ask Mrs. Erlynne to be kind enough to come up. (*Reads card.*) Say I shall be very glad to see her. [*Exit* PARKER. She wants to see me, Arthur.

LORD WINDERMERE (*takes card and looks at it*) : Margaret, I *beg* you not to. Let me see her first, at any rate. She's a very dangerous woman. She is the most dangerous woman I know. You don't realise what you're doing.

LADY WINDERMERE : It is right that I should see her.

LORD WINDERMERE : My child, you may be on the brink of a great sorrow. Don't go to meet it. It is absolutely necessary that I should see her before you do.

LADY WINDERMERE : Why should it be necessary ?

Enter PARKER.

PARKER : Mrs. Erlynne.

Enter MRS. ERLYNNE.

[*Exit* PARKER.

MRS. ERLYNNE : How do you do, Lady Windermere ? (*To* LORD WINDERMERE.) How do you do ? Do you know, Lady Windermere, I am so sorry about your fan. I can't imagine how I made such a silly mistake. Most stupid of me. And as I was driving in your direction, I thought I would take the opportunity of returning your property in person with many apologies for my carelessness, and of bidding you good-bye.

LADY WINDERMERE : Good-bye ? (*Moves towards sofa with* MRS. ERLYNNE *and sits down beside her.*) Are you going away, then, Mrs. Erlynne ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : Yes ; I am going to live abroad again. The English climate doesn't suit me. My—heart is affected here, and that I don't like. I prefer living in the south. London is too full of fogs and—and serious people, Lord Windermere. Whether the fogs produce the serious people or whether the serious people produce the fogs, I don't know, but the whole thing rather gets on my nerves, and so I'm leaving this afternoon by the Club Train.

LADY WINDERMERE : This afternoon ? But I wanted so much to come and see you.

MRS. ERLYNNE : How kind of you ! But I am afraid I have to go.

LADY WINDERMERE : Shall I never see you again, Mrs. Erlynne ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : I am afraid not. Our lives lie too far apart. But there is a little thing I would like you to do for me. I want a photograph of you, Lady Windermere—would you give me one ? You don't know how gratified I should be.

LADY WINDERMERE : Oh, with pleasure. There is one on that table. I'll show it to you. [*Goes across to the table.*

LORD WINDERMERE (*coming up to* MRS. ERLYNNE *and speaking in a low voice*) : It is monstrous your intruding yourself here after your conduct last night.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*with an amused smile*) : My dear Windermere, manners before morals !

LADY WINDERMERE (*returning*) : I'm afraid it is very flattering—I am not so pretty as that. [*Showing photograph.*

MRS. ERLYNNE : You are much prettier. But haven't you got one of yourself with your little boy ?

LADY WINDERMERE : I have. Would you prefer one of those ?

MRS. ERLYNNE . Yes.

LADY WINDERMERE : I'll go and get it for you, if you'll excuse me for a moment. I have one upstairs.

MRS. ERLYNNE : So sorry, Lady Windermere, to give you so much trouble.

LADY WINDERMERE (*moves to door R.*) : No trouble at all, Mrs. Erlynne.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Thanks so much. [*Exit* LADY WINDERMERE *R.*

You seem rather out of temper this morning Windermere. Why should you be ? Margaret and I get on charmingly together.

LORD WINDERMERE : I can't bear to see you with her. Besides, you have not told me the truth, Mrs. Erlynne.

MRS. ERLYNNE : I have not told *her* the truth, you mean.

LORD WINDERMERE (*standing C.*) : I sometimes wish you had. I should have been spared then the misery, the anxiety, the annoyance of the last six months. But rather than my wife should know—that the mother whom she was taught to consider as dead, the mother whom she has mourned as dead, is living—a divorced woman, going about under an assumed name, a bad woman preying upon life, as I know you now to be—rather than that, I was ready to supply you with money to pay bill after bill, extravagance after extravagance, to risk what occurred yesterday, the first quarrel I have ever had with my wife. You don't understand what that means to me. How could you? But I tell you that the only bitter words that ever came from those sweet lips of hers were on your account, and I hate to see you next her. You sully the innocence that is in her. (*Moves L.C.*) And then I used to think that with all your faults you were frank and honest. You are not.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Why do you say that?

LORD WINDERMERE : You made me get you an invitation to my wife's ball.

MRS. ERLYNNE : For my daughter's ball—yes.

LORD WINDERMERE : You came, and within an hour of your leaving the house you are found in a man's rooms—you are disgraced before every one. (*Goes up stage C.*)

MRS. ERLYNNE : Yes.

LORD WINDERMERE (*turning round on her*) : Therefore I have a right to look upon you as what you are—a worthless, vicious woman. I have the right to tell you never to enter this house, never to attempt to come near my wife——

MRS. ERLYNNE (*coldly*) : My daughter, you mean.

LORD WINDERMERE : You have no right to claim her as your daughter. You left her, abandoned her when she was but a child in the cradle, abandoned her for your lover, who abandoned you in turn.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*rising*) : Do you count that to his credit, Lord Windermere—or to mine?

LORD WINDERMERE : To his, now that I know you.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Take care—you had better be careful.

LORD WINDERMERE : Oh, I am not going to mince words for you. I know you thoroughly.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*looking steadily at him*) : I question that.

LORD WINDERMERE : I *do* know you. For twenty years of your life you lived without your child, without a thought of your child. One day you read in the papers that she had married a rich man. You saw your hideous chance. You knew that to spare her the ignominy of learning that a woman like you was her mother, I would endure anything. You began your blackmailing.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*shrugging her shoulders*) : Don't use ugly words, Windermere. They are vulgar. I saw my chance, it is true, and took it.

LORD WINDERMERE : Yes, you took it—and spoiled it all last night by being found out.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*with a strange smile*) : You are quite right, I spoiled it all last night.

LORD WINDERMERE : And as for your blunder in taking my wife's fan from here and then leaving it about in Darlington's rooms, it is unpardonable. I can't bear the sight of it now. I shall never let my wife use it again. The thing is soiled for me. You should have kept it and not brought it back.

MRS. ERLYNNE : I think I *shall* keep it. (*Goes up.*) It's extremely pretty. (*Takes up fan.*) I shall ask Margaret to give it to me.

LORD WINDERMERE : I hope my wife will give it you.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Oh, I'm sure she will have no objection.

LORD WINDERMERE : I wish that at the same time she would give you a miniature she kisses every night before she prays—It's the miniature of a young innocent-looking girl with beautiful *dark* hair.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Ah, yes, I remember. How long ago that seems ! (*Goes to sofa and sits down.*) It was done before I was married. Dark hair and an innocent expression were the fashion then, Windermere ! [*A pause.*

LORD WINDERMERE : What do you mean by coming here this morning ? What is your object ? [*Crossing L.C. and sitting.*

MRS. ERLYNNE (*with a note of irony in her voice*) : To bid good-bye to my dear daughter, of course. (LORD WINDERMERE *bites his under lip in anger.* MRS ERLYNNE *looks at him, and her voice and manner become serious. In her accents as she talks there is a note of deep tragedy. For a moment she reveals herself.*) Oh, don't imagine I am going to have a pathetic scene with her, weep on her neck and tell her who I am, and all that kind of thing. I have no ambition to play the part of a mother. Only once in my life have I known a mother's feelings That was last night. They were terrible—they made me suffer—they made me suffer too much. For twenty years, as you say, I have lived childless,—I want to live childless still. (*Hiding her feelings with a trivial laugh.*) Besides, my dear Windermere, how on earth could I pose as a mother with a grown-up daughter ? Margaret is twenty-one, and I have never admitted that I am more than twenty-nine, or thirty at the most. Twenty-nine when there are pink shades, thirty when there are not. So you see what difficulties it would involve. No, as far as I am concerned, let your wife cherish the memory of this dead, stainless mother. Why should I interfere with her illusions ? I find it hard enough to keep my own. I lost one illusion last night. I thought I had no heart. I find I have, and a heart doesn't suit me, Windermere. Somehow it doesn't go with modern dress. It makes one look old. (*Takes up hand-mirror from table and looks into it.*) And it spoils one's career at critical moments.

LORD WINDERMERE : You fill me with horror—with absolute horror.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*rising*) : I suppose, Windermere, you would like me to retire into a convent, or become a hospital nurse, or something of that kind, as people do in silly modern novels. That is stupid of you, Arthur ; in real life we don't do such things—not as long as we have any good looks left, at any rate. No—what consoles one nowadays is not repentance, but pleasure. Repentance is quite out of date. And besides, if a woman really repents, she has to go to a bad dressmaker, otherwise no one believes in her. And nothing in the world would induce me to do that. No ; I am going to pass entirely out of your two lives. My coming into them has been a mistake—I discovered that last night.

LORD WINDERMERE : A fatal mistake.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*smiling*) : Almost fatal.

LORD WINDERMERE : I am sorry now I did not tell my wife the whole thing at once.

MRS. ERLYNNE : I regret my bad actions. You regret your good ones—that is the difference between us.

LORD WINDERMERE : I don't trust you. I *will* tell my wife. It's better for her to know, and from me. It will cause her infinite pain—it will humiliate her terribly, but it's right that she should know.

MRS. ERLYNNE : You propose to tell her ?

LORD WINDERMERE : I am going to tell her.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*going up to him*) : If you do, I will make my name so infamous

that it will mar every moment of her life. It will ruin her, and make her wretched. If you dare to tell her, there is no depth of degradation I will not sink to, no pit of shame I will not enter. You shall not tell her—I forbid you.

LORD WINDERMERE : Why ?

MRS. ERLYNNE (*after a pause*) : If I said to you that I cared for her, perhaps loved her even—you would sneer at me, wouldn't you ?

LORD WINDERMERE : I should feel it was not true. A mother's love means devotion, unselfishness, sacrifice. What could you know of such things ?

MRS. ERLYNNE : You are right. What could I know of such things ? Don't let us talk any more about it— as for telling my daughter who I am, that I do not allow. It is my secret, it is not yours. If I make up my mind to tell her, and I think I will, I shall tell her before I leave the house—if not, I shall never tell her.

LORD WINDERMERE (*angrily*) : Then let me beg of you to leave our house at once. I will make your excuses to Margaret.

Enter LADY WINDERMERE *R. She goes over to* MRS. ERLYNNE *with the photograph in her hand.* LORD WINDERMERE *moves to back of sofa, and anxiously watches* MRS. ERLYNNE *as the scene progresses.*

LADY WINDERMERE : I am so sorry, Mrs. Erlynne, to have kept you waiting. I couldn't find the photograph anywhere. At last I discovered it in my husband's dressing-room—he had stolen it.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*takes the photograph from her and looks at it*) : I am not surprised—it is charming. (*Goes over to sofa with* LADY WINDERMERE, *and sits down beside her. Looks again at the photograph.*) And so that is your little boy ! What is he called ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Gerard, after my dear father.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*laying the photograph down*) : Really ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes, if it had been a girl, I would have called it after my mother. My mother had the same name as myself, Margaret.

MRS. ERLYNNE : My name is Margaret too.

LADY WINDERMERE : Indeed !

MRS. ERLYNNE : Yes. (*Pause.*) You are devoted to your mother's memory, Lady Windermere, your husband tells me.

LADY WINDERMERE : We all have ideals in life. At least we all should have. Mine is my mother.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Ideals are dangerous things. Realities are better. They wound, but they're better.

LADY WINDERMERE (*shaking her head*) : If I lost my ideals, I should lose everything.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Everything ?

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes. (*Pause.*)

MRS. ERLYNNE : Did your father often speak to you of your mother ?

LADY WINDERMERE : No, it gave him too much pain. He told me how my mother had died a few months after I was born. His eyes filled with tears as he spoke. Then he begged me never to mention her name to him again. It made him suffer even to hear it. My father—my father really died of a broken heart. His was the most ruined life I know.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*rising*) : I am afraid I must go now, Lady Windermere.

LADY WINDERMERE (*rising*) : Oh no, don't.

MRS. ERLYNNE : I think I had better. My carriage must have come back by this time. I sent it to Lady Jedburgh's with a note.

LADY WINDERMERE : Arthur, would you mind seeing if Mrs. Erlynne's carriage has come back.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Pray don't trouble, Lord Windermere.

LADY WINDERMERE : Yes, Arthur, do go, please.

[LORD WINDERMERE *hesitates for a moment and looks at* MRS. ERLYNNE. *She remains quite impassive. He leaves the room.*

(*To* MRS ERLYNNE.) Oh ! What am I to say to you ? You saved me last night ? [*Goes towards her.*

MRS. ERLYNNE : Hush—don't speak of it.

LADY WINDERMERE : I must speak of it. I can't let you think that I am going to accept this sacrifice. I am not. It is too great. I am going to tell my husband everything. It is my duty.

MRS. ERLYNNE : It is not your duty—at least you have duties to others besides him. You say you owe me something ?

LADY WINDERMERE : I owe you everything.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Then pay your debt by silence. That is the only way in which it can be paid. Don't spoil the one good thing I have done in my life by telling it to any one. Promise me that what passed last night will remain a secret between us You must not bring misery into your husband's life. Why spoil his love ? You must not spoil it. Love is easily killed. Oh ! how easily love is killed. Pledge me your word, Lady Windermere, that you will *never* tell him. I insist upon it.

LADY WINDERMERE (*with bowed head*) : It is your will, not mine.

MRS. ERLYNNE : Yes, it is my will. And never forget your child—I like to think of you as a mother. I like you to think of yourself as one.

LADY WINDERMERE (*looking up*) : I always will now. Only once in my life I have forgotten my own mother—that was last night. Oh, if I had remembered her I should not have been so foolish, so wicked.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*with a slight shudder*) : Hush, last night is quite over.

Enter LORD WINDERMERE.

LORD WINDERMERE : Your carriage has not come back yet, Mrs. Erlynne.

MRS. ERLYNNE : It makes no matter. I'll take a hansom. There is nothing in the world so respectable as a good Shrewsbury and Talbot. And now, dear Lady Windermere. I am afraid it is really good-bye. (*Moves up C.*) Oh, I remember, You'll think me absurd, but do you know I've taken a great fancy to this fan that I was silly enough to run away with last night from your ball. Now, I wonder would you give it to me ? Lord Windermere says you may. I know it is his present.

LADY WINDERMERE : Oh, certainly, if it will give you any pleasure. But it has my name on it. It has ' Margaret ' on it.

MRS. ERLYNNE : But we have the same Christian name.

LADY WINDERMERE : Oh, I forgot. Of course, do have it. What a wonderful chance our names being the same !

MRS. ERLYNNE : Quite wonderful. Thanks—it will always remind me of you. [*Shakes hands with her.*

Enter PARKER.

PARKER : Lord Augustus Lorton. Mrs. Erlynne's carriage has come

Enter LORD AUGUSTUS.

LORD AUGUSTUS : Good morning, dear boy. Good morning, Lady Windermere. (*Sees* MRS. ERLYNNE.) Mrs. Erlynne !

MRS. ERLYNNE : How do you do, Lord Augustus ? Are you quite well this morning ?

LORD AUGUSTUS (*coldly*) : Quite well, thank you, Mrs. Erlynne.

MRS. ERLYNNE : You don't look at all well, Lord Augustus. You stop up too late—it is so bad for you. You really should take more care of yourself. Good-bye, Lord Windermere. (*Goes towards door with a bow to* LORD AUGUSTUS. *Suddenly smiles and looks back at him.*) Lord Augustus ! Won't you see me to my carriage ? You might carry the fan.

LORD WINDERMERE : Allow me !

MRS. ERLYNNE : No ; I want Lord Augustus. I have a special message for the dear Duchess. Won't you carry the fan, Lord Augustus ?

LORD AUGUSTUS : If you really desire it, Mrs. Erlynne.

MRS. ERLYNNE (*laughing*) : Of course I do. You'll carry it so gracefully. You would carry off anything gracefully, dear Lord Augustus.

[*When she reaches the door she looks back for a moment at* LADY WINDERMERE. *Their eyes meet. Then she turns, and exit C. followed by* LORD AUGUSTUS.

LADY WINDERMERE : You will never speak against Mrs. Erlynne again, Arthur, will you ?

LORD WINDERMERE (*gravely*) : She is better than one thought her.

LADY WINDERMERE : She is better than I am.

LORD WINDERMERE (*smiling as he strokes her hair*) : Child, you and she belong to different worlds. Into your world evil has never entered.

LADY WINDERMERE : Don't say that, Arthur. There is the same world for all of us, and good and evil, sin and innocence, go through it hand in hand. To shut one's eyes to half of life that one may live securely is as though one blinded oneself that one might walk with more safety in a land of pit and precipice.

LORD WINDERMERE (*moves down with her*) : Darling, why do you say that ?

LADY WINDERMERE (*sits on sofa*) : Because I, who had shut my eyes to life, came to the brink. And one who had separated us——

LORD WINDERMERE : We were never separated.

LADY WINDERMERE : We never must be again. O Arthur, don't love me less and I will trust you more. I will trust you absolutely. Let us go to Selby. In the Rose Garden at Selby the roses are white and red.

Enter LORD AUGUSTUS *C.*

LORD AUGUSTUS : Arthur, she has explained everything !

(LADY WINDERMERE *looks horribly frightened at this.* LORD WINDERMERE *starts* LORD AUGUSTUS *takes* WINDERMERE *by the arm and brings him to front of stage He talks rapidly and in a low voice.* LADY WINDERMERE *stands watching them in terror.*) My dear fellow, she has explained every demmed thing We all wronged her immensely It was entirely for my sake she went to Darlington's rooms. Called first at the Club—fact is, wanted to put me out of suspense—and being told I had gone on—followed—naturally frightened when she heard a lot of us coming in—retired to another room—I assure you, most gratifying to me, the whole thing. We all behaved brutally to her. She is just the woman for me. Suits me down to the ground. All the conditions she makes are that we live entirely out of England. A very good thing too. Demmed clubs, demmed climate, demmed cooks, demmed everything. Sick of it all !

LADY WINDERMERE (*frightened*) : Has Mrs. Erlynne—— ?

LORD AUGUSTUS (*advancing towards her with a low bow*) : Yes, Lady Windermere —Mrs. Erlynne has done me the honour of accepting my hand.

LORD WINDERMERE : Well, you are certainly marrying a very clever woman !

LADY WINDERMERE (*taking her husband's hand*) : Ah, you're marrying a very good woman !

CURTAIN